



CSML

Civil Society and Media Leadership Program



QUARTERLY REPORT
January to March 2015
Submitted to USAID/Liberia

Award Number: 669-A-00-10-00074-00
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	4
2. PROGRAM PURPOSE.....	5
3. PROGRAM RESULTS.....	5
4. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.....	6
4.1. MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW.....	6
4.2. FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND IT.....	6
4.2.1. FINANCE	6
4.2.2. ADMINISTRATION	6
4.2.3. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	7
5. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR CSOS AND FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA (Workplan 1.)	8
5.1. FULLY INTEGRATE CSML PARTNERS AND ENHANCE COLLABORATION (WORKPLAN 1.1.)	8
5.1.1. ENHANCE COLLABORATION WITHIN CSML (WORKPLAN 1.1.1.).....	8
5.1.2. ENHANCE COLLABORATION WITH AND AMONG PARTNERS (WORKPLAN 1.1.2.)	8
5.2. OBJECTIVE ONE: (WORKPLAN 1.2.)	8
5.2.1. ENHANCE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF RESOURCE PARTNERS (RPS) (WORKPLAN 1.2.1)	8
5.2.2. ENHANCE THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSOS) (WORKPLAN 1.2.2.).....	10
5.3. OBJECTIVE TWO: (WORKPLAN 1.3.).....	13
5.3.1. PROMOTE ADVOCACY AND ADDRESS CORRUPTION THROUGH CSO LED ACTIVITIES (WORKPLAN 1.3.1.).....	13
5.4. OBJECTIVE THREE: (WORKPLAN 1.4.)	13
5.4.1. IMPROVE CITIZENS' DIALOGUE WITH THEIR LEADERS THROUGH CSO LED ACTIVITIES (WORKPLAN 1.4.1.).....	14
5.5. OBJECTIVE FOUR: (WORKPLAN 1.5.)	14
5.5.1. ENHANCE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF MEDIA MAIN PARTNERS (MMP) (WORKPLAN 1.5.1.)	14
5.5.2. SPECIALIZED CONSULTING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (WORKPLAN 1.5.2.).....	15
5.5.3. SOL PLAATJE MEDIA LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM (WORKPLAN 1.5.3.)	16
5.5.4. WOMEN'S MEDIA INITIATIVE (WORKPLAN 1.5.4.).....	17
5.5.5. HIGH SCHOOL TO JOURNALISM INITIATIVE (WORKPLAN 1.5.5.)	19
5.5.6. ON-LINE MEDIA RESOURCES CLEARINGHOUSE (WORKPLAN 1.5.7.).....	19
5.6. OBJECTIVE FIVE: (WORKPLAN 1.6.)	20
5.6.1. ENHANCE CONTENT OF PARTNER CRSS (WORKPLAN 1.6.1.).....	20
5.6.2. ENHANCE TECHNICAL SUSTAINABILITY OF CRSS (WORKPLAN 1.6.2.).....	20
5.6.3. EXIT STRATEGY (WORKPLAN 1.6.3.)	21
5.7. OBJECTIVE SIX: (WORKPLAN 1.8.)	21
5.7.1. ENSURE EFFECTIVE USE OF SMS SYSTEM (WORKPLAN 1.8.1.)	21
5.7.2. ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY OF SMS INITIATIVE (WORKPLAN 1.8.3.).....	23
5.8. OBJECTIVE SEVEN: (WORKPLAN 1.9.)	23
5.8.1. SUPPORT DISSEMINATION OF EBOLA-RELATED INFORMATION (WORKPLAN 1.9.1.)	23
5.8.2. ENGAGE COUNTY FOI NETWORKS IN FIGHT AGAINST EBOLA (WORKPLAN 1.9.2.)	24
5.8.3. SUPPORT COORDINATION AMONG KEY FOI STAKEHOLDERS (WORKPLAN 1.9.3.)	27

5.8.4.	CONTINUE DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING FOI TRACKING SYSTEM (WORKPLAN 1.9.4.)	28
5.8.5.	PROVIDE FOI TRAINING FOR CSO NETWORK LEADERS (WORKPLAN 1.9.5.).....	30
5.8.7.	MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLICATION (WORKPLAN 1.9.7.).....	31
5.9.	OBJECTIVE EIGHT (WORKPLAN 1.10.).....	31
5.9.1.	VOTE SMART VANS (WORKPLAN 1.10.2.).....	31
5.9.2.	SPECIAL ELECTION GRANTS (WORKPLAN 1.10.3.).....	31
5.9.3.	JOURNALISM TRAININGS (WORKPLAN 1.10.4.)	32
5.9.4.	WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT (WORKPLAN 1.10.7.)	32
5.9.5.	ELECTION COORDINATION COMMITTEE (WORKPLAN 1.10.8.).....	33
5.10.	OBJECTIVE NINE: (WORKPLAN 1.11.).....	33
5.10.1.	ENSURE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISES (WORKPLAN 1.11.1.)	33
5.10.2.	PROMOTE ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PARTNER CSOS/CRSS (WORKPLAN 1.11.2.).....	34
5.10.3.	ENHANCE IMPACT OF THE REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTER (WORKPLAN 1.11.3.).....	34
5.10.4.	EXIT STRATEGY FOR DEN-L AND THE RSC (WORKPLAN 1.11.5.)	34
5.11	EBOLA-RELATED ACTIVITIES (WORKPLAN 1.7.)	35
5.11.1.	PROMOTE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS-RAISING THROUGH COMMUNITY OUTREACH (WORKPLAN 1.7.1.).....	35
5.11.2.	ENHANCE CITIZEN AND GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT (WORKPLAN 1.7.2.)	36
5.11.3.	STRENGTHEN MEDIA COVERAGE OF EBOLA CRISIS (WORKPLAN 1.7.4.).....	39
6.	GENDER AND YOUTH (WORKPLAN 2.).....	41
6.1.	ENSURE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENDER AND YOUTH MAINSTREAMING STRATEGIES (WORKPLAN 2.1) 41	
6.1.1.	TRAIN GENDER FOCAL POINTS FROM MPS (WORKPLAN 2.1.2.).....	42
6.1.2.	PROVIDE ONGOING GENDER AND YOUTH MENTORING WITH CSOS AND CRSS (WORKPLAN 2.1.3.).....	42
6.1.3.	WORK WITH LIWOMAC TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO FEJAL TO ROLL OUT SEA PREVENTION/AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN THE MEDIA (WORKPLAN 2.1.4.).....	42
7.	GRANTS (WORKPLAN 3.).....	42
7.1.	ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH USAID AND IREX POLICIES (WORKPLAN 3.1.).....	42
7.1.1.	ENSURE ALL SUBGRANT DOCUMENTS ARE PROPERLY FILED IN LINE WITH CSML CLOSEOUT SCHEDULE (WORKPLAN 3.1.1.)	43
7.1.2.	ENSURE ALL SUBGRANT INFORMATION IS POSTED INTO IKNOW TRACKING SYSTEM REGULARLY (WORKPLAN 3.1.2.) 43	
7.2.	PROVIDE SUPPORT TO CS, MEDIA, RSC, AND GENDER & YOUTH DEPARTMENTS AS NEEDED (WORKPLAN 3.2.)	43
7.3.	ADMINISTER GRANTS (WORKPLAN 3.3.)	43
8.	MONITORING AND EVALUATION (Workplan 4.)	43
8.1.	PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (WORKPLAN 4.1.)	43
8.1.1.	ADMINISTER THE PMP (WORKPLAN 4.1.1.).....	43
8.1.2.	CONDUCT ASSESSMENTS (WORKPLAN 4.1.5.).....	45
8.2.	TRAINING AND TOOLS (WORKPLAN 4.2.)	45
9.	ATTACHMENTS.....	45

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The CSML network this quarter has had visible, sustainable impact in three important areas—**keeping Ebola at bay, equalizing the gender balance, and organizing highly visible national events.**

This quarter marked an important period in the ongoing fight against Ebola. Despite the presence of the disease in neighboring Guinea and Sierra Leone, Liberians have grown lax in adhering to preventative measures, assuming that the threat of contracting the disease has passed in their country. .

The Sr. Media Specialist and TCC supported the Ebola Communication Strategy and weekly Ebola briefings and shared excerpts with CRSs. Their partners aired jingles, produced billboards and printed banners, flyers, and stickers. LIWOMAC and CEMESP finalized production of the “Ebola Must Go” messages. All SMS hubs held opinion polls gauging public knowledge and beliefs about Ebola survivors, the use of ETUs, and reopening of schools. The CSO Ebola Response Task Force investigated and reported on Ebola funds, hosted two policy dialogues, and released two policy briefs on the lack of accounting for \$831,150 in county development funds and \$244,270,515 to international and local organizations. Situation Room reporters produced 95 stories, and the FOI Network held more than 30 meetings and aired 15 radio programs requesting accountability of Ebola resources. The Inter-Religious Council and National Civil Society Council met with the Ministries of Education, Health, and Internal Affairs to represent citizens’ concerns around Ebola. The Ebola community leaders’ forums were expanded to new communities, and partners followed up with the first 60 communities to help them carry out their action plans. As data from the communities continued to grow, CSML partners organized a conference to showcase the communities’ work, and President Sirleaf, delivering the keynote address, thanked IREX for its work. The conference made it possible for community members who led the fight against Ebola to share their experiences and brainstorm on how to prevent the disease from making resurgence.

The quarter also marked an important time for women, as the Press Union of Liberia at its annual congress passed the Media Gender Policy, the culmination of a long-term CSML goal. Work on it began in 2010 when IREX and LIWOMAC collaborated with the PUL, Female Association of Journalists of Liberia, and ActionAid to host a Women in the Media conference. LIWOMAC has been especially active in pressing for policy to be adopted. Also, CSML’s Women in the Media Initiative (WMI) mentees produced 40 stories for Liberia Women’s Democracy Radio (LWDR) news, two young WMI scholars were offered internships at Radio Veritas, Girls Media Frontiers produced three videos for Power TV, and six main partners designated Gender Focal Persons during the quarter. Women however still struggle for equal rights, and two horrific rape stories prompted the IREX and LIWOMAC program to organize 8 forums around that topic, bringing together 106 women and 97 men.

Further demonstrating their maturity to act as high level conveners, CSML partners organized three national conferences. IREX worked with LIWOMAC to host a national forum to document community radio station interventions in preventing the spread of Ebola. NAYMOTE and seven other partners organized a conference that brought rural community leaders to town to share their issues and concerns with government and civil society, and more importantly, show how they were dealing with them. Keynote speaker President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said, “Let me say to all of you [IREX and partners] how proud we are about this role that you have played that has brought us to this point of progress.” Over 135 participants developed recommendations for a final report. IREX also worked with LIWOMAC to organize a conference calling attention to the impacts of rape and the gaps in rape services and to make recommendations on a community approach to tackling rape.

2. PROGRAM PURPOSE

To sustain peace in Liberia through greater inclusion, giving a voice to, informing and engaging Liberian citizens.

3. PROGRAM RESULTS

This quarter Program Results focus on three CSML events of national significance.

National Forum on “Trusted Voices in Challenging Times: Community Radio and the Ebola Crisis”

On March 17, seventy-two people took part in a CSML national forum to discuss and document the intervention of community radio stations in preventing the spread of Ebola. Panelists consisting of reporters and station managers analyzed lessons learned and identified best practices. Liberia’s Minister of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism Lewis G. Brown was one of many to acknowledge the power of community radio to change people’s understanding of and behavior toward the threat of Ebola.



There was a recommendation for a greater push for passage of the proposed Community Radio Sustainability Act. Other recommendations focused on what was learned by community radio stations during the crisis and how it can be used again. During the worst times of the crisis, community radio stations were developing new contacts in their efforts to reach out to communities. Conference goers called on them to build on those contacts to further enhance community profiles and enable them to become part of the radio. They also recommended that the Association of Liberia Community Radio serve as the central actor for sharing resources.

National Conference on “Ebola’s Impact on Communities: Learning from Their Experiences to Plan for the Future”



Eight CSML partner CSOs that had facilitated more than 60 community leaders’ forums on dealing with secondary impacts of Ebola organized a conference to give rural community leaders an opportunity to share their experiences and successes on a national stage. Eleven of the community members spoke on panels alongside government and civil society leaders on four topic areas that came up most often in the community forums—Government Communications and Engagement with Communities, Health Care Infrastructure, Social and Traditional Issues, and Emergency Preparedness. Two other community members gave testimonies of their

experiences. Panelists also included the Minister of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism, the chief of the National Traditional Council, a member of the House of Representatives, the CDC-Liberia Deputy Director, the Acting Head of the Incidence Management Team, and county health officers.

The Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who had just spoken to the US President about the important role communities played in fighting Ebola, served as keynote speaker. “We see this conference as a pace-setter,” she said, “in a long-term agenda to strengthen community structures to enhance our overall national development agenda.”

At the final plenary session the 135 participants worked on recommendations for steps to mitigate the chances of such a disaster re-occurring, and all recommendations will be compiled in a conference report.

National Conference on “Rape as a Threat to the Survivor and Advancement of a Nation-Bridging the Gaps towards Justice and Accountability”

LIWOMAC, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, and IREX held a series of activities culminating with a national conference to draw attention to the serious impacts of rape and the many gaps in rape prevention and treatment services. They had organized eight forums using the “I Know My Rights” model in counties hardest hit by rape. These discussions, brought out diverse beliefs and opinions about rape and its causes, which went into a report presented at the conference. The conference was organized into two panels, one focusing on the role of communities in the prevention and response to rape and the other examining the state of services provided by the police, justice, and health sector with regard to rape. Nearly half of the conference’s participants were men, important because.....



Keynote speaker Sen. Jewel Howard Taylor spoke of the need for a budget allocation for rape services; a representative of the Liberian National Police pointed to the existence of only one vehicle for the Women and Children Protection Unit which is to apprehend suspects and gather evidence; and a prosecutor lamented the tendency of communities, including victims’ families, to hide or compromise the evidence. Recommendations for action included the establishment of community rape task forces, a budget allocation for rape response, establishment of an additional court for sexual offences, a review of the One Stop rape response centers, community police structures, and recruitment of more female prosecutors.

4. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

4.1. MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

4.2. FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND IT

4.2.1. FINANCE

4.2.1.1. PERFORM ROUTINE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

4.2.1.1.1. ENSURE ONGOING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF CSML

During the quarter, the program continued to maintain its burn rate as payments were made on election, Ebola awareness, and regular mentoring and training subgrants, and other CSML program activities. Program expenditures for the quarter amounted to US\$636,000.00, representing approximately 25% of the annual budget of \$2,482,000.00.

4.2.1.1.2. PERFORM ONGOING SUPPORT TO SUBGRANTEES ON FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Throughout the quarter, the Finance Office worked with the Grants and Program departments to process milestone payments for twenty-nine (29) subgrants for implementation of Ebola awareness and regular mentoring and training of CSOs/CRSs.

4.2.2. ADMINISTRATION

4.2.2.1. ENSURE THAT US-HIRES’ DOCUMENTATION IS UP-TO-DATE

The Administration Office started the process of work permit renewal at the Ministry of Labor for the Senior Program Manager during the month, and the process is expected to be completed in the next quarter

4.2.2.2. REVIEW, UPDATE, AND ENSURE ALL PERSONNEL RECORDS ARE PROPERLY FILED

Seven new staff members were hired during the quarter for the positions of Coder, Grants Associate, Grants Assistant, Finance & Administration Assistant and Driver. The Administrative Office worked with all new staff members to gather required personnel documents for hard copy and electronic filing during the reporting period.

4.2.2.3. RENEW SERVICE CONTRACTS AND OFFICE LEASE AGREEMENT

During the quarter, the office lease and maintenance agreements were amended to include extension of the lease period from March 2 to June 3, 2015 and additional space upstairs for seating of some new and old staff. Contracts for security service and office yard cleaning were also renewed during the reporting period.

4.2.2.4. ENSURE IKFO IS UPDATED ON A TIMELY BASIS

The Administrative office completed Personnel Action Forms (PAFs) for seven new staff and uploaded all required personnel documents in the IREX online human resource tracking system (iKFO) during the quarter. The Administrative Office also worked with the DC Office to finalize pending PAFs for all old staff in line with requirements for staff performance review for FY14.

4.2.2.5. PROVIDE SUPPORT TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS AS NEEDED

The Administrative Office made all logistical arrangements for the successful hosting of CSML's year six annual work plan retreat, provided support to all departments, and carried out all routine administrative activities during the quarter.

4.2.3. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

4.2.3.1. PROVIDE ONGOING IT SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE TO IREX

During the quarter, the IT Officer provided routine computer maintenance to the IREX team, including repair and reinstallation of software. Also the IREX shared drive was installed on all computers of staff and mentors so they can back up their content regularly. The IT Officer also completed networking for the new office space and set up laptops for new employees. He assisted in the process of purchasing Situation Room reporters' computers and licensing software. During the same quarter, the IT Officer assisted in the purchase of internet modems for IREX staff to replace missing or damaged modems, and have them logged in a newly created and improved logging system to enable proper tracking of modems and monthly subscriptions. The IT Officer also worked with IREX's SAT phone company during the quarter to ensure that IREX's damaged satellite phone was replaced with a loaner phone. He completed the installation of QuickBooks multi-user for the finance section and completed burning of CSO Resource Toolkit and Key Messages in Advocacy on compact discs (CDs) for all CSOs during the quarter.

4.2.3.2. PROVIDE IT SUPPORT TO CSML PARTNERS

4.2.3.2.1. PROVIDE SUPPORT TO PUL WITH OMRCH

The Facebook page of the Online Media Resources Clearing House received a total of 3,692 (three thousand six hundred ninety two "likes" during the quarter.

The IT Officer monitored the Online Media Resources Clearing House (OMRCH) during the quarter. The site remains active with all social media components still functional. The Facebook page of the site received a total of three thousand six hundred ninety two (3,692) likes, with seventy four (74) unique visitors during the quarter.

4.2.3.2.2. PROVIDE SUPPORT TO LMC WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF SMS INITIATIVE

The IT Officer worked with LMC ICT Manager to resolve technical issues with the server where the SMS platform is installed. He also worked with MWETANA, the IT firm that developed the SMS platform, and the LMC IT Officer to carry out some adjustments on the opinion poll component of the SMS platform and ensure full functionality during

the quarter. The IT Officer also assisted in the purchase of bulk SMS messages from Lonestar and Cellcom GSM companies for the SMS short code. He worked with Cellcom to resolve an issue that emerged mid-month and coordinated with Powernet, the LMC's Internet service provider (ISP), to address a technical configuration issue that temporarily made the site's URL non-functional. The IT Officer and the Liberia Media Center (LMC) IT Officer visited Buchanan, Grand Bassa County on March 17, 2015 to carry out system maintenance and installation of SMS software on the station's computer after it was being formatted. The team also installed Microsoft Office Application and other useful software.

5. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR CSOS AND FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA (WORKPLAN 1.)

5.1. FULLY INTEGRATE CSML PARTNERS AND ENHANCE COLLABORATION (WORKPLAN 1.1.)

5.1.1. ENHANCE COLLABORATION WITHIN CSML (WORKPLAN 1.1.1.)

5.1.1.1. HOST WEEKLY PROGRAM MEETINGS (WORKPLAN 1.1.1.1.)

Throughout the quarter the Program Team continued to hold weekly meetings on Tuesdays to share information about upcoming activities, coordinate logistics, and discuss pressing program-related issues. With several public conferences and events being held this quarter, this coordination was particularly useful for all members of the Team.

5.1.2. ENHANCE COLLABORATION WITH AND AMONG PARTNERS (WORKPLAN 1.1.2.)

5.1.2.1. HOST LEADERSHIP BREAKFAST MEETINGS (WORKPLAN 1.1.2.3.)

On February 18th IREX's Program Team and Chief of Party held a Leadership Breakfast meeting at the Royal Grand Hotel with the Executive Directors (EDs) and Heads of IREX's various Main Partners. The meeting was led by the IREX Gender and Youth Manager, who explained the concept of a Gender Focal Point and IREX's intention to train such an individual in each of the Main Partner organizations (inclusive of CEMESP and NAYMOTE) in order to ensure ongoing gender mainstreaming in programming, organizational structure, decision making, and proposal writing, among other key contributions. At the meeting, the EDs committed themselves to working further with Izatta to discuss the concept and to identify an individual at their organization to serve this role. (see section 6.1.1.).

5.1.2.2. COMPILE AND SEND TRAINING MANUALS AND OTHER RESOURCE MATERIALS TO HQ (WORKPLAN 1.1.2.6)

During the quarter the Senior Civil Society Specialist completed editing of the Advocacy II Manual to distribute to main partners and send to HQ. In addition the CSO Resource Toolkit and Key Messages in Advocacy were put on CDs and bound in hard copy for all CSOs. See 5.2.1.2.3.

5.2. OBJECTIVE ONE: (WORKPLAN 1.2.)

5.2.1. ENHANCE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF RESOURCE PARTNERS (RPS) (WORKPLAN 1.2.1)

Six Executive Directors (2 female and 4 males designated Gender Focal Points within their organizations.

The discussion at the Leadership Breakfast meeting about the training of Gender Focal Points at each MP (see 5.1.2.1.) led the EDs to make selections for their Gender Focal Points.

5.2.1.1. STRENGTHEN RPS' GRANT MENTORING SKILLS (WORKPLAN 1.2.1.3.)

5.2.1.1.1. ADMINISTER INCREASED NUMBER OF GRANTS TO RPS FOR CSOs (WORKPLAN 1.2.1.3.1.)

The resource partners (RPs) and the Regional Support Center (RSC) worked with CSOs to complete and close elections, Ebola, and community leaders' forum grants. In their regular mentoring they are often able to use their proposal and grant implementation skills to advise CSOs on grants they are carrying out. (See section 2.2.2.1.2)

5.2.1.2. EXIT STRATEGY FOR RPS (WORKPLAN 1.2.1.5.)

5.2.1.2.1. ESTABLISH AND CONVENE COMMITTEE TO DECIDE POLICY ON CERTIFICATES FOR RP ORGANIZATIONS/MTS AND MENTORS AT END OF PROGRAM CONFERENCE STAKEHOLDERS' MEETINGS TO DISCUSS SETTING UP TRAINING INSTITUTE (WORKPLAN 1.2.1.5.1.)

The discussions on the certification policy were concluded during the January Mentoring Meeting: RP institutions will be certificated, along with each Mentor and Master Trainer. Each certificate will bear the names of the trainings each institution and individual have delivered. The RPs recommended a CSML end of program conference where the handing out of certificates should occur and that there be wide media coverage with invited guests to include the USAID Mission Director, government officials, IREX/CSML staff and other NGOs.

5.2.1.2.2. STAKEHOLDERS' MEETINGS TO DISCUSS SETTING UP TRAINING INSTITUTE (WORKPLAN 1.2.1.5.2.)

Forty-four national CSOs, international donor organizations, and capacity building service providers responded to a survey on supply and demand in capacity building services.

During the January 6-7 RP Mentoring Meeting (see 5.2.2.1.3.) a discussion was held on the training institute that RPs had proposed in year 4. Several of the MTs would be interested in using their training skills to their better advantage, but they were divided on whether they preferred to do it as individual consultants, as a part of their current organizations, or as a new training institute. Ownership and management of a training institute was a concern, as was the question of how much market there was for training and capacity building services.

For this reason the CS Team met with the M&E Team to discuss a possible survey that could reach a broader audience than a stakeholders meeting and provide cost information that some might consider too confidential for discussion at a meeting. The Team worked with the M&E Team to develop the survey. Survey questions were sent to CSOs, firms and individuals that currently provide capacity building services, and donor organizations that support the development of CSOs. This approach, which was administered in most cases online through Survey Monkey, would provide anonymity so that data could be acquired on whether and how much CSOs would pay for capacity development services themselves, how much providers charge for their services, and how much donors are willing to pay for their partner CSOs to receive services. The survey was administered in February, and the results were presented to the CS Team in March, as follows:

- The greatest capacity building needs as identified by 33 CSOs are
 - Financial Management 69.7% of respondents listed this need
 - Integrating M&E into Programming 69.7
 - Managing M&E Data 60.6
 - Strategic Planning 60.6
- The greatest CSO capacity needs as identified by 8 donors are
 - Financial Management 75% of respondents listed this in their top 5
 - Strategic Planning 75%
 - Reporting/Public Relations 50%
 - Other topics, mentioned once—advocacy, M&E, fundraising, Organizational Development

- Only six service providers (international and local) were identified, and of these three responded. The areas in which they provide capacity building to CSOs were
 - business/social enterprise development 3 replies
 - general organizational capacity 2
 - social mobilization/advocacy 2
 - leadership 1
 - M&E 1
- One-third of CSO respondents would be willing to pay for capacity building assistance, with the range varying between \$25 and \$100 or from 10 to 50% of total costs.
- Eighty-two percent of CSOs said they have received capacity building services from an international organization or company, with 65% reporting that they were very satisfied or extremely satisfied.
- Seventy-nine percent of CSOs said they have received capacity building services from a local provider, with 46% reporting that they were very satisfied or extremely satisfied.
- All of the eight donor partners have paid for capacity building services for CSOs, at a cost range of US\$2,000-600,000.

The results will be shared with Main Partners for discussion to help them identify steps they may want to take toward offering services to other CSOs after CSML closes down.

5.2.1.2.3. EDIT AND PRINT TRAINING MATERIALS AND OTHER RESOURCE MATERIALS (WORKPLAN 1.2.1.5.3.)

Seventy-two (72) printed sets of CSO Resource Toolkits and Key Messages in Advocacy and fifty-one copies on CDs were distributed to CSOs.

The CS Team completed the CSO Resource Toolkit (Attachment 1) and Key Messages in Advocacy (Attachment 2) for distribution by the RPs to all CSOs as reference guides. The Toolkit contains policies and sample forms that were put together over the life of the program by the RPs for use in mentoring. It has four sections—Planning, Financial Management, Human Resources, and Management for Advanced CSOs—and has wire binding so it can be easily opened to any page for photocopying sample forms. The Key Messages in Advocacy is a compact 4-page document of the primary concepts they need to remember, complemented by illustrations and diagrams from the most useful training handouts. All training participants received the relevant handouts during their training, but some may have left their organizations, and this compilation will provide an easy reference.

In addition the Team has been doing a final update and editing of all training materials used during the CSML program. In the quarter under review, the Advocacy II training manual was completed and is ready to send to HQ and distribute among RP trainers and Mentors. (Attachment 3)

5.2.1.2.4. Administer year 5 participatory assessments & discuss (WORKPLAN 1.2.1.5.4.)

Eight Main Partners (MPs) and two other partners got assessed for year five by the M&E and CS Teams

The last assessments for eight MPs and two other partners were completed during the quarter, and the scores and results are being prepared so that they can be shared with the partners. This will help them independently implement their own capacity building plans since the program will phase out this year.

5.2.2. ENHANCE THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSOS) (WORKPLAN 1.2.2.)

5.2.2.1. ENHANCE MENTORING PROVIDED TO CSOS BY RPS (WORKPLAN 1.2.2.1.)

5.2.2.1.1. PROVIDE INTENSIVE MENTORING TO SET UP FILES AND FINALIZE POLICIES (WORKPLAN 1.2.2.1.1.)

Thirty-eight CSOs received one-on-one mentoring in their offices as the Ebola crisis wound down.

The travel ban imposed due to the wide spread of the Ebola virus was lifted by IREX, and the RPs and the RSC resumed their mentoring. However, some CSOs were not mentored in the first half of the quarter because they had not re-opened their offices; many individuals had re-located to other communities during the crisis and had not returned. Topics such as financial management and reporting, review and adoption of constitutions, strategic planning, human resource documents, and managing files were covered during the quarter. The RPs and RSC are using the CSOs' grants reporting to re-enforce the filing systems, helping them to file receipts and other documents related to grants received from IREX and other sources.

The following achievements were reported:

- ALICOR worked with mentors on forms for tracking staff movement and work planning and on its overall filing system.
- Concerned Christian Community (CCC) received help in organizing its files after an office move.
- Flomo Theatre Production (FTP) appointed its Gender Desk Coordinator, and as a result, has written new HR policies.
- We Care Foundation completed a new HR policy and constitution and started developing its code of conduct on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.
- African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) has designated an M&E focal person.
- Children Assistance Program (CAP) drafted a new constitution with mentoring assistance.
- Federation of Liberian Youth (FLY) is incorporating suggestions from mentors on its constitution revision.
- Community Empowerment and Sustainable Program (CESP) has just reconstituted its board and is writing board policies.
- Self-Help Initiative for Sustainable Development (SHIFSD) has completed a financial policy manual and a human resources manual.
- Gbarzon Youth for Development (GBAYDA) has been working with mentors on basic financial record keeping systems for dues and the sales of produce from its farm. Meanwhile, their membership numbers are increasing.
- Rural Agriculture Alternatives (RAA) in the last quarter has reviewed and upgraded job descriptions for four major positions, rearranged the entire filing system, and procured additional box files and shelves to support the filing system.
- WANEP partners Ballet Gedeh Rooster, Sustainable Agriculture Programme for Liberia (SAP), AmuWulu, Save My Future Foundation (SAMFU), Southeastern Women Development Association (SEWODA), and Community Empowerment and Sustainable Program (CESP) worked with their mentors on financial and narrative reporting, filing, and computer usage. WANEP reported that all have proper filing systems in place and have made progress in their financial and record keeping systems.

5.2.2.1.2. PROVIDE MENTORING ON PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT AND GRANTS IMPLEMENTATION (WORKPLAN 1.2.2.1.2.)

The Resource Partners (RPs) and the Regional Support Center (RSC) have been working with CSOs to complete and close their election and Ebola grants. CSOs presented final reports on these activities to the RPs and RSC for payment of final milestones.

Several CSOs have had success with their new proposal development skills. National Adult Education Association of Liberia (NAEAL) has been struggling since the death of two key management team members (Administrator and Executive Director) in 2012. There was a capacity gap in project proposal writing, and the scaling down of projects led to concerns about sustainability. After two staff members took the proposal writing training and brought the materials back to the others, NARDA conducted a series of mentoring sessions with the program team. They

developed a sample proposal and presented it to the mentoring team for feedback. Discussion followed and revisions were made. As a result in the last year NAEAL has won funding for new projects from two donors, the Sirleaf Market Women Foundation, for \$167,000, and Bread for the World, for \$14,000. Now there is once again a team of program staffs at NAEAL who are skilled in proposal writing.

Following are other examples from the quarter under review:

- Sustainable Agriculture Program for Liberia (SAP-Liberia) recently secured a \$205,000.00 grant from the Ministry Of Agriculture under its World Bank Agriculture Sector Rehabilitation Program (ASRP) funded project to build local capacity through farmer field school training in vegetable and low land rice production in eight communities.
- Rural Agriculture Alternatives (RAA) is currently implementing a grant won from Food and Enterprise Development (FED-Liberia) to work with local farmers on the production of rice and vegetables in Nimba and Lofa Counties and attributes this success to the CSML program.
- Bassa Youth Caucus received mentoring help in the development of a proposal aimed at addressing violence in concession areas in Grand Bassa County. The mentor provided insight specifically focused on how to identify the problem the proposal seeks to address.
- WONSOGOL forwarded a call for proposals from UN Women to its two of its member organizations, United Muslim Women Advocacy and Empowerment Organization (UMWAE0) and Society for Women and AIDS in Africa (SWAA). WONGOSOL then worked with them to help shape their proposals.

5.2.2.1.3. HOLD MENTORING MEETINGS FOR MTs AND MENTORS (WORKPLAN 1.2.2.1.6.)

The last Mentoring Meeting for year 5 was held on January 6-7 for all MTs and Mentors. There was discussion of the status of CSOs that had been put in category C a year ago for poor participation, and the group realized that the process of labeling them as category C brought the desired “shock effect” to most, who improved their efforts and even went on to implement grants. In the end, five CSOs who have not made themselves available for mentoring for a year were recommended by their RPs to be dropped from the program. At this point, the only effect will be their ineligibility for certification. One CSO, Volunteers To Support International Effort in Developing Africa (VOSIEDA) has not been available for mentoring because they have made significant strides in setting up their systems and developing policies. Thus they have not needed the regular mentoring but have attended some training.

Another agenda topic focused on cost extension planning. The CS Team laid out the activities included and asked MTs and Mentors to each list areas of specialty they may want to concentrate on for training and mentoring, and whether they preferred to stay primarily in one geographic region or were open to travel more. The results revealed that they are not comfortable assigning themselves to the new topics of accountability and engaging government and will need assistance to do so. IREX will hire a consultant to develop the materials and train the Trainers and Mentors if the cost extension comes through.

The CS Team shared the set of institutional policies and templates they had finalized for the CSO Resource Toolkit and the Key Messages in Advocacy, both discussed in 5.2.1.2.3. This will be another reference tool for CSO as the program ends.

Other discussion topics included administering the Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) to the RPS and the CSOs, the possible training institute, and the certification policy, all discussed elsewhere.

5.2.2.2. EXIT STRATEGY FOR CSOS (WORKPLAN 1.2.2.2.)

5.2.2.2.1. ESTABLISH AND CONVENE MT/MENTORS COMMITTEE TO DECIDE POLICY ON CERTIFICATES FOR CSOS AND/OR INDIVIDUALS AT END OF PROGRAM CONFERENCE (WORKPLAN 1.2.2.2.1.)

The mentoring meeting discussed the certification of CSOs as well as RPs. It was decided that if possible there should be programs in each county to which the CSOs and mentoring partners will invite county officials and other county stakeholders. The RPs and RSC agreed that certificates be given to individual organizations who have met all the requirements.

5.2.2.2.2. DEVELOP AND UTILIZE CHECKLIST OF ALL DOCUMENTS CSOS SHOULD HAVE IN THEIR OFFICES (WORKPLAN 1.2.2.2.2.)

The checklist of documents needed by CSOs was a part of the CSO Resource Toolkit discussed in 5.2.1.2.3.

5.2.2.2.3. ADMINISTER YEAR FIVE PARTICIPATORY ASSESSMENTS & DISCUSS FINAL RESULTS WITH EACH CSO (WORKPLAN 1.2.2.2.3.)

Forty Civil Society Organizations were assessed during the period by Mentors and Master Trainers

During the period, forty CSOs benefiting from the CSML program were assessed using the Organizational Capacity Assessment tool, the other twenty CSML beneficiary organizations were not available for assessment as reported by the Resource Partners (RPs). Most of the assessed organizations have been able to develop and adopt constitutions; they now have mission and vision statements, personnel policies, trained board members, financial and other key policies which they did not have before the CSML program. As the program draws near its final closing date, the RPs have worked with these organizations to develop plans to address gaps that were identified during the assessments. These plans will be managed by these organizations without the support of RPs.

5.3. OBJECTIVE TWO: (WORKPLAN 1.3.)

5.3.1. PROMOTE ADVOCACY AND ADDRESS CORRUPTION THROUGH CSO LED ACTIVITIES (WORKPLAN 1.3.1.)

5.3.1.1. PROVIDE GRANTS IN SUPPORT OF CIVIC EDUCATION—ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW PROCESS, AND IN RESPONSE TO EBOLA—AND MENTOR CSOS IN GRANT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION (WORKPLAN 1.3.1.1.)

NAYMOTE Partners for Democratic Development held seven community leaders' forums in new communities in Montserrado, Margibi, and Bomi Counties. The NAYMOTE grant also included holding follow up meetings with nine communities in the same counties where forums were held earlier, either by NAYMOTE or LIWOMAC. See section 5.11.1.1.

5.3.1.2. PROVIDE MENTORING TO REVIEW KEY ADVOCACY CONCEPTS LEARNED (WORKPLAN 1.3.1.2.)

The RPs used the new "Key Messages in Advocacy" document during their mentoring visits over the quarter.

As a result of the mentoring and training in advocacy, Rural Human Rights Activists Programme (RHRAP) released a newsletter during the quarter highlighting its work to promote and monitor accountability and transparency in the use of revenue from the oil sector. According to the newsletter, RHRAP is looking at the "level of beneficiary community engagement in defining service delivery and development priorities. They are also studying to know whether the priorities are accurately reflected in the implementation." Secondly it is tracking "the completion and impacts of Corporate Social Responsibility projects" implemented by the national Oil Company of Liberia (NOCAL).

5.4. OBJECTIVE THREE: (WORKPLAN 1.4.)

5.4.1. IMPROVE CITIZENS' DIALOGUE WITH THEIR LEADERS THROUGH CSO LED ACTIVITIES (WORKPLAN 1.4.1.)

5.4.1.1. PROVIDE GRANTS TO PROMOTE CSOS' INVOLVEMENT IN NATIONAL REFORM PROCESSES SUCH AS THE CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW PROCESS THROUGH MENTORING AND GRANT ACTIVITIES (WORKPLAN 1.4.1.1.)

A National Ebola Conference brought together 135 (one hundred thirty five) participants to look at examples of community response to Ebola related issues.

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, serving as Keynote Speaker, said "Let me say to all of you [IREX and partners] how proud we are about this role that you have played that has brought us to this point of progress."

On March 19-20, CSML held a national Ebola conference where community leaders that had taken part in the community leaders' forums could share their concerns and their successes with government, international NGOs, USAID and civil society leaders. Under the theme, "Ebola's Impact on Communities: Learning from Their Experience to Plan for the Future," the conference brought 13 of the community leaders to Monrovia to speak on four panels—Government Communications and Engagement with Communities, Health Care Infrastructure, Social and Traditional Issues, and Emergency Preparedness. The topics were selected from an analysis of the data that came from the 60 CLFs that the eight MPs had organized between October and December. This data had been organized into a 104-page table, and a second data table was extracted from it showing recurring topics brought up by the leaders, where they were raised, and how many times they were raised. (Attachments 4&5)

Her Excellency President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf spoke as keynote speaker at the opening session, where the US Ambassador and the Acting Head of the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response also made remarks. In her speech the President said, "We see this conference as a pace-setter in a long-term agenda to strengthen community structures to enhance our overall national development agenda. We understand that with a chain of over one thousand community leaders in 13 counties across the country, you have identified several critical gaps in the fight against Ebola. We ask IREX to share its findings with the government to assist us in our planning overall process."

NAYMOTE received a small grant to work with the CS Team and eight other CSML partners on a Conference Committee. The committee studied the data gathered from the 60 CLF forums to identify the panel topics and selected community leaders from their forums who could best speak on the four topics. The panels also included representatives of government, international organizations, and civil society leaders.

Invitations were also sent widely to UN, international and national organizations and government entities to ensure that the various actors in managing the Ebola virus were there to hear from the communities and engage in discussion during the Question and Answer sessions following each panel.

Speakers who joined the community leaders on the panels included Lewis Brown, Minister of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism; Chief Zanzan Karwa, Chief of the National Traditional Council; Representative Saah Joseph, District #13, Montserrado County; Dr. Desmond Williams, Acting Director of CDC/Liberia; Dr. Francis Kateh, Chief Medical Officer of Jackson Doe Hospital and Acting Head of the Ebola Incidence Management Team; district commissioners; community nurses; and a County Health Officer. The conference also included short sessions for community representatives to tell the stories of their encounters with Ebola and a final plenary session where all participants worked on recommendations for steps to mitigate the chances of such a disaster re-occurring. All recommendations will be compiled in a conference report.

5.5. OBJECTIVE FOUR: (WORKPLAN 1.5.)

5.5.1. ENHANCE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF MEDIA MAIN PARTNERS (MMP) (WORKPLAN 1.5.1.)

5.5.1.1. HOLD MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH EACH MMP (WORKPLAN 1.5.1.1.)

The Media Team held ten (10) meetings with Main Media partners for continued capacity enhancement.

During the quarter, the Media Team held ten meetings with main media partners to discuss a range of issues including plans for the CSML cost extension, increasing productivity under the Situation Room, coordinating activities for a national conference on rape, and a forum on community radio's response to the Ebola crisis.

The Liberia Women Media Action Committee (LIWOMAC), the Liberia Media Center (LMC), the Center for Media Studies and Peace Building (CEMESP), and the Association of Liberia Community Radios (ALICOR) met with the Team in a planning session for the no-cost extension and possible cost extension periods. On the technical sustainability of CRSs, partners stressed the need for peer learning, pairing a struggling station such as Radio Jorwah with a strong station in the same county like Super Bongese. They also agreed that continued mentoring was important because of staff turnover in CRSs. It was agreed that LIWOMAC would take over the High School to Journalism program since students were already working out of the LWDR training studio. LIWOMAC's "I Know My Rights" forum will focus more on accountability during this next period. The discussion also focused on developing strategies to monitor the media, both CRSs and Monrovia-based outlets, expanding technical support and mentoring to IREX's existing 19 CRSs and eight new stations in the 15 counties.

It was decided that, during the cost extension, ALICOR will manage the Equipment Resources Pool to provide spare parts and technical support for 27 stations across the 15 counties. ALICOR will also manage a help desk that will receive technical complaints from CRSs and refer them to the six regional technicians who will respond to problems. The LMC will continue to operate the Situation Room, focusing on accountability of Ebola funds and promises made by the government and international donors. Fifteen people (8 f, 7 m) attended the meeting.

LIWOMAC, working in collaboration with IREX's Gender and Youth Manager, will continue to focus on mentoring and increasing women's representation at community radio stations and encourage engagement to promote women's attention on accountability issues through radio listening clubs.

During the reporting period, IREX held several meetings with the LMC and the Liberia CSO Ebola Task Force to increase productivity under the Situation Room. IREX urged the task force to beef up reporting activities, media monitoring and produce policy briefs. As a result of the meetings, six reporters were hired, and IREX hired a video and broadcast consultant to assist the reporters with editing and production.

5.5.2. SPECIALIZED CONSULTING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (WORKPLAN 1.5.2.)

5.5.2.1. ENHANCE MENTORING OF SCBDI PARTNERS TO IMPROVE EDITORIAL CONTENT AND BUSINESS PLAN IMPLEMENTATION (WORKPLAN 1.5.2.1.)

5.5.2.1.1. INCREASE ONE-ON-ONE MENTORING WITH REPORTERS AND PRODUCERS IN KEY AREAS (WORKPLAN 1.5.2.1.1.)

Twenty reporters (15 males; five females) participated in two (2) mentee and editor capacity building meetings

Reporters assigned to the Situation Room and those under the SCBDI program held two monthly meetings at the Liberia Media Center to brainstorm story ideas and plan monthly reporting trips. Some of the ideas included Ebola orphans, economic impact of Ebola on local communities, Ebola safety methods in the wake of the decline in number of cases, reopening of the border, illegal mining in Grand Bassa, and the impact of the declining workforce at Arcellor Mittal. The reporters planned to pursue those stories in Monrovia, Bomi, and Grand Cape Mount Counties. In addition, they discussed following up on the case of the 12-year-old girl who died as a result of rape.

Participating media outlets included SKY-FM/TV, LUX-FM, LWDR, ELUM, Women Voices, Informer, and Public Agenda.

5.5.2.1.2. HOLD MORE REPORTING TRIPS (WORKPLAN 1.5.2.1.2.)

SCBDI reporters did not make any reporting trips during the quarter because of mechanical problems with the LMC's van and the need to order spare parts. However, five of the six Situation Room reporters made trips around Monrovia and to Grand Cape Mounty and Bomi Counties. See section 5.11.4 for more details.

5.5.3. SOL PLAATJE MEDIA LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM (WORKPLAN 1.5.3.)

5.5.3.1. ENHANCE THE ROLE OF SOL PLAATJE FELLOWS AS MEDIA MENTORS (WORKPLAN 1.5.3.1.)

5.5.3.1.1. INCREASE MENTORING FOR CRS AND SCBDI PARTNERS (WORKPLAN 1.5.3.1.1.)

5.5.3.1.1.1. SOL PLAATJE FELLOWS CONTINUE TO WORK WITH SCBDI PARTNERS ON BUSINESS PLAN DEVELOPMENT (WORKPLAN 1.5.3.1.1.1.)

Three (2) SCBDI partners completed business plans.

During the quarter, IREX resumed activities under the Sol Plaatje initiative that were suspended during the height of the Ebola crisis. The Senior Media Specialist and the Chief of Party met with Sol Plaatje Fellow Samuka Konneh to discuss plans helping media outlets develop sales and marketing as part of their business plan strategy. The consultant met with the four media outlets that had completed draft business plans or were in the process of completing them to guide in their successful completion. The four outlets were SKY-FM/TV and Women Voices, Heritage, and Informer newspapers. Of these, SKY-FM/TV and Women Voices and Heritage newspapers now have finalized business plans.

SKY-FM/TV's five-year business plan targets digital migration of its FM/TV services via an international satellite cable TV network like SATCOM, in keeping with standards set by the International Telecommunications Authority (ITA). The ITA has set a 2015 deadline for all countries to go digital. The Liberia Broadcasting System in conjunction with the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications is working on digital migration in Liberia, but the process has been slow, and the delay poses a challenge and a major risk factor for SKY to achieve its target.

The entity also plans to expand its reach to seven of Liberia's 15 counties during the first year of implementation. Currently, the station covers three counties—Bong, Montserrado and Margibi. The lack of television content is SKY's major risk factor in implementing this expansion. In preparation for the expansion, SKY has contracted the services of the Liberia Movie Union to produce television content in the form of a family soap opera.

Women Voices newspaper proposes increasing its current newspaper circulation from 750 to 1,250, starting in June 2015. The paper also wants to expand to five days a week instead of three. To support its expansion plan, the paper is designing a number of fundraising activities that include seeking sponsorship of a column in the paper dedicated to women issues under the theme, "Women Support Program." The plan is to hire a gender sensitive reporter to manage the page.

The consultant helped Heritage newspaper develop a four-year business plan that focuses on increasing and expanding the paper's circulation by 67 percent, from 1,500 to 2,500 a day. The newspaper wants to expand to three additional counties—Margibi, Bong and Nimba. The entity needs a bank loan, which is a major challenge because the bank requires collateral of assets with high monetary value.

In March, the Sol Plaatje consultant worked with the Senior Media Program Officer to organize the resumption of the Media and Business Sustainability Exchange forum. The consultant assisted in developing the concept and finding a co-sponsor for the event slated to take place mid-April 2015. The MBS forums were successful in connecting media outlets with businesses so they can learn strategies for exploring new advertising markets.

During the quarter, the Sol Plaatje Fellow also assessed SCBDI partners to determine the impact of the Ebola crisis on advertising sales and other revenue. The assessment targeted six outlets: Heritage, Informer, Public Agenda, LWDR, SKY-FM/TV and Women Voices. The assessment showed that revenue dropped during the height of the health crisis. As the crisis subsided in January, sales increased by about 10 percent, but the outlets are still struggling to get back to where they were before Ebola.

5.5.4. WOMEN'S MEDIA INITIATIVE (WORKPLAN 1.5.4.)

5.5.4.1. ENSURE IMPROVED WORKING ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN IN THE MEDIA (WORKPLAN 1.5.4.1.)

5.5.4.1.1. FINALIZE GENDER POLICY (WORKPLAN 1.5.4.1.1.)

5.5.4.1.1.1. VALIDATE AND DEVELOP ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER POLICY (WORKPLAN 1.5.4.1.1.1.)

Media Gender policy validated and adopted by the media on a 67-1 vote pass.

The Press Union of Liberia took a major step forward at its annual congress on February 6, 2015 by passing the Media Gender Policy by a 67-1 vote. The lone 'No' voter said women should prove themselves in the work place instead of hiding behind a policy and was widely criticized by the majority of participants.

This step is the culmination of a long-term CSML goal. Work on the gender policy began in 2010 when IREX and LIWOMAC collaborated with the PUL, the Female Association of Journalists of Liberia and ActionAid to host the first national women-focused media conference to discuss challenges impeding the advancement of Liberian media women. The "Advancing Women in the Media Strategy" emanated from the conference and served as a framework to address the low representation of women in the media and develop concrete ways to attract and retain them.

LIWOMAC organized a validation exercise in February to give PUL members and other stakeholders a chance to review the latest draft before the PUL congress. Forty-one participants reviewed the document and offered input for modification and improvement. One major issue was the reserving of a 30 percent quota for women in the newsroom. Weade Kobbah Wureh, of the University of Liberia's Mass Communications Department, suggested that the quota be eliminated so the document would focus on achieving equal representation of women across newsrooms in Liberia. "What happens if the media reaches 30% women representation?" she asked.

Mrs. Kobbah Wureh also suggested that the section on sexual harassment address supervisors who use their power to proposition subordinates for sexual favors. During the discussion, several men and women blamed women for lack of their own advancement, a point which animated the discussion. One media manager said that women advertising agents should play along with sexual harassment until they get the advertising, which drew sharp criticism from the audience.

In presenting the document, Estella Nelson, president of LIWOMAC, told the PUL members that the policy seeks to create a safe work environment for all, especially women. She also highlighted some successes since the PUL and LIWOMAC began advocating the policy, such as The Inquirer newspaper constructing separate bathrooms for male and females at its new offices, and encouraged other media outlets to follow The Inquirer's example.

PUL President Abdulla Kamara said the Union wants to create a level playing field for both genders. LIWOMAC, PUL and major media stakeholders had held a series of consultations prior to the validation and adoption of the media gender policy.

5.5.4.2. INCREASE NUMBER OF WOMEN IN NEWSROOMS (WORKPLAN 1.5.4.2.)

5.5.4.2.1. Enhance mentoring for WMI scholars and female journalists (WORKPLAN 1.5.4.2.1.)

WMI mentees produced 40 stories for LWDR news

WMI mentees were quite prolific during the quarter, contributing immensely to the diversity of news reports on LWDR. The reports covered a variety of topics including Ebola-related stories, agriculture, rape, and women's health.

LWDR reporters Gabrieline Cleon and Naomi Falika (also part of the Girls Media Frontier) contributed 25 headline news reports to LWDR news. The young women are also assigned to the Liberia Civil Society Ebola Response Task Force. Some of Falika's major stories included the discharge of the last Ebola patient, Vice President Joseph Boakai's criticism of the Agriculture Ministry for failing to assist farmers, and the establishment of agricultural colleges in four counties. Cleon's reports included the first national forum on Ebola, removal of Ebola victims' ashes to a new site, students returning to school post-Ebola, and the fire that gutted LUX-FM.

Other stories contributed to LWDR news by WMI scholars were a 15-year-old rape survivor's admittance to a safe home, fire damage to William Booth School, and market women receiving cash benefits from UNDP.

5.5.4.2.2. WORK WITH WMI SCHOLARS TO IMPROVE CVs/WORK SAMPLES (WORKPLAN 1.5.4.2.1.1.)

Two WMI mentees land internships at Radio Veritas

During the quarter, LIWOMAC distributed biographical data of four WMI mentees to Radio Veritas and SKY-FM/TV for employment consideration. The goal is to encourage the stations to offer the young women internship opportunities or consider them for possible employment. As a result, two of the WMI mentees were offered internships at Radio Veritas.

5.5.4.2.2.1. WORK WITH RURAL MENTEES TO IMPROVE ELECTION AND EBOLA-RELATED REPORTING (WORKPLAN 1.5.4.2.1.2.)

Eighteen (18) story grants were awarded to 9 (nine) rural mentees to pursue stories; two (2) mentees produced a total of twenty-one (21) stories.

LIWOMAC awarded 18 story grants to nine WMI mentees in six counties—Montserrado, Nimba, Bong, Lofa, Grand Bassa, and River Gee. Each mentee received \$75 to assist in reporting two stories. An emphasis was put on Ebola stories and women's issues, but the grants also permitted them to expand to other topics.

The most prolific mentees were two women at LWDR, Veronica Gluashea and Dioda Wreh, with eleven and ten stories respectively. Gluashea produced stories on a new scholarship program launched by a local group, 50 people with disabilities receiving help from a humanitarian group, and students urging the government to provide more buses to ease the transportation problem. Wreh's topics included the effect of Ebola on women's health, women with disabilities or living with HIV-AIDS, Ebola orphans asking the government to build them a home, and ActionAid's request to the Constitution Review Committee to ensure that women, girls and other marginalized groups are protected in the new Constitution.

Nana Zaway, reporter for Radio Kerghemahn in Ganta, said the grant covered transportation and phone cards to do her stories on the impact of Ebola on women, especially at border towns. "Without the grant, you won't be able to go out and interview people in faraway towns and villages or put units in your phone to file a report," she said. "News is news, it has to be timely; it has to be fresh."

5.5.4.3. ENHANCE "I KNOW MY RIGHTS" COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORUMS (WORKPLAN 1.5.4.4.)

Eight community forums were held with 203 participants (97 men, 106 women) in counties with high rape incidences, from which data was gathered and put into a report.

During the quarter, LIWOMAC expanded the “I Know My Rights” forum to focus on the prevalence of rape in Liberia. The decision was inspired by the case of the 12-year-old Brewerville girl who was raped and later bled to death while her family sought medical attention in the middle of the night. Three hospitals refused to accept the girl.

In order to engage communities in a conversation about rape, a series of eight consultative “I Know My Rights” forums were held in Montserrado, Margibi, Bong, and Nimba counties. Participants discussed the role citizens can play in the prevention and prosecution of rape suspects, the impact of rape on communities, the ineffectiveness of the legal system, and the Ministry of Gender’s role in dealing with rape.

A common complaint was about the slow pace of police response to rape cases. As a result, many cases are compromised. Citizens said they do not have confidence in the legal system due to widespread corruption and bribery. Police who attended the forums said they lack logistics, especially vehicles, to effectively pursue rape cases. The data from the meetings were used in compiling a report and planning a national conference, discussed in section 6.1.

5.5.5. HIGH SCHOOL TO JOURNALISM INITIATIVE (WORKPLAN 1.5.5.)

Student journalists produced seven 30-minute radio programs aired on LWDR.

During the quarter, students working at the LWDR studio produced seven editions of the High School to Journalism radio program. The 30-minute productions featured a variety of issues affecting young people, such as teen pregnancy, early sex and its impact on the development of young people, student reactions to the reopening of school post-Ebola, how students spent their time during the Ebola crisis, and the recent decision by the Ministry of Gender to arrest street children caught selling during school hours. The program airs on LWDR at 2: 15 p.m. every Thursday.

The students said they are pleased that LWDR began working with them after the program was halted due to the Ebola crisis. “The program has improved my reading skills,” said Adjoua Dadzi, a junior at Paynesville Community School. “I am learning from a lot of experienced people in the studio. We develop our own topics; learn how to ask good questions. It has had a positive impact on me.”

During the quarter, LWDR concluded an agreement with LUX-FM to air the High School to Journalism program. However, the station was gutted by fire in late March before the station had a chance to begin airing the program.

5.5.6. ON-LINE MEDIA RESOURCES CLEARINGHOUSE (WORKPLAN 1.5.7.)

5.5.6.1. PROMOTE AWARENESS OF OMRCH (WORKPLAN 1.5.7.1.)

During the quarter, the PUL website and other social media tools remained active. The website experienced a surge last quarter, but declined slightly this quarter. As of March 31, the website registered 1,468 visitors and 13,072 hits compared to 2,075 visitors and 17,332 hits the prior quarter. The Facebook Page recorded 3,692 likes as of March 31 compared to 3,338 in the last quarter. The site can be accessed at [website@http://www.pul.org.lr/](http://www.pul.org.lr/) and the Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100005807670975&fref=ts>

Some key stories featured on the site during the quarter included news about Ebola, press releases about PUL activities, and links to other online sources. Between March 3-26, 39 stories from local and international sources and links were posted. More than 85 percent of these were Ebola-related, while minute portions covered President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and government affairs. Below are the topics of some major stories:

- UNDP Ends Phase One of Sea Erosion Project (March 26, 2015)
- Does Logging Help Poor and Developing Countries? (March 26, 2015)
- How Liberia's President Survived the Ebola Crisis (March 26, 2015)

- Sex Brought Ebola Back? Woman in Liberia Might Have Contracted Virus from Her Boyfriend's Semen (March 26, 2015)
- MSF to Hand Over to Liberia an Ebola Treatment Center (March 25, 2015)
- Liberia Says First Ebola Patient in a Month is Isolated Case (March 25, 2015)
- Could Sex Have Brought Ebola Back to Liberia? – NBCNews.com (March 25, 2015)

5.6. OBJECTIVE FIVE: (WORKPLAN 1.6.)

5.6.1. ENHANCE CONTENT OF PARTNER CRSS (WORKPLAN 1.6.1.)

LMC trainers mentored 31 (thirty-one) reporters (4 females; 27 males) in Nimba, Bong and Grand Bassa Counties

During the quarter, LMC trainers provided mentoring in content creation to 31 staffers (4 females, 27 males) at the following community radio stations: Super Bongese and Radio Bong Mines, Bong County; Magic FM, Grand Bassa County; and Radio Sehnwei and Radio Karnplay, Nimba County.

The reopening of schools post-Ebola and health care were the focus of the mentoring for seven reporters (5 males, 2 females) at Magic FM. Reporters and editors were also mentored in script writing and interviewing. The reporters went into the field to interview residents about the effects of Ebola on schools and other sectors of the community, and the stories were aired February 11-14.

From March 18-22, 10 reporters (9 males, 1 female) at Radio Karnplay learned how to produce stories on themes related to Ebola and education. At Radio Sehnwei, eight males received mentoring in reporting on the reopening of schools during the same period.

From March 23-26, six reporters (5 men, 1 woman) at Super Bongese Radio Station learned how to gather news content and produce stories on rising transportation costs, government delays in paying civil servants, and delays in completing the construction of Bong Community College. The stories were aired during the daily newscasts.

5.6.2. ENHANCE TECHNICAL SUSTAINABILITY OF CRSS (WORKPLAN 1.6.2.)

Transmitters were installed at two (2) community radio stations in Lofa County.

LMC and Regional service Technicians assisted nine (9) CRSs with repairs and maintenance.

The LMC's senior technician and Regional Service Technicians were busy during the quarter. In Lofa County they installed new 500-watt transmitters at Radio Kintoma (Voinjama) and Radio Vahun, work that had been delayed because of the Ebola crisis. At Radio Kintoma they also worked on the station's control console; before that they had provided guidance by cellphone. Radio Vahun had computer problems that were addressed. Technicians also upgraded the transmitter system at Radio Tamba Taikor (Foya), and at Radio Life (Zorzor) they enhanced the signal strength on the transmitting antenna. The technicians prepared a transmitter's check log sheet to record daily reading of station's equipment.

In Bong County, the technician installed a grounding system at Radio Totota to protect the transmitter from lightning and did maintenance work on the computer. One of the station's staff was mentored in operating the mixer. Radio Jorwah's broadcast was interrupted for three days due to a technical problem that technicians fixed. Also the Radio Bong Mines transmitter was shut down because of an increase in temperature, and the regional service technician resolved the problem.

In Montserrado, LWDR's 2000-watt transmitter and the amplifier were repaired. The technicians also provided technical support via telephone to stations in Lofa, Montserrado and Bong counties.

5.6.2.1. ESTABLISH EQUIPMENT RESOURCES POOL (WORKPLAN 1.6.2.1.)

5.6.2.1.1. BUILD PARTNERS' CAPACITY TO MANAGE POOL AND DEVELOP A PLAN TO MANAGE AND
PROCURE PARTS TRAIN REGIONAL SERVICE TECHNICIANS (WORKPLAN 1.6.2.1.1.)

During the quarter the media team held extensive conversations with the LMC, DEN-L and ALICOR on the management of the ERP. The Senior Media Specialist discussed with each organization their role in the management and maintenance of the ERP; DEN-L will store the equipment, while the LMC will enhance ALICOR's capacity to sustain and maintain the ERP Hub.

5.6.3. EXIT STRATEGY (WORKPLAN 1.6.3.)

5.6.3.1. DEVELOP PROPOSAL FOR JOURNALISM TRAINING INSTITUTE (WORKPLAN 1.6.3.1.)

One Bong County radio station began peer mentoring of two other Bong County stations.

In February, the LMC submitted to the Media Team a plan for assessing CRSs for a peer learning and exchange initiative and a set of related questions. The Team responded to the questions and advised the LMC to draw up the peer mentoring schedule based on their experience with the CRSs. The LMC began the pairing by assigning staff from Super Bongese to mentor Radio Jorwah and Radio Totota, all in Bong County, with a focus on programming and management.

5.7. OBJECTIVE SIX: (WORKPLAN 1.8.)

5.7.1. ENSURE EFFECTIVE USE OF SMS SYSTEM (WORKPLAN 1.8.1.)

5.7.1.1. PROVIDE ONGOING MENTORING AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO RADIO HUBS (WORKPLAN 1.8.1.1.)

The LMC team and IREX IT Officer continued to provide mentoring support to the four SMS Hub operators throughout the quarter. On March 17, they travelled to Grand Bassa to provide technical assistance to Magic FM, which had been experiencing problems with their computer that houses the software. The issue was resolved and the station is back to conducting polls on the air. Additionally, the server license for the SMS platform expired in March, so the LMC team transitioned the platform back to the old server which has a smaller capacity but will be sufficient to serve as the interim server until the platform is transitioned to Frontline SMS (see section 5.7.2.).

5.7.1.2. ENHANCE USAGE OF OPINION POLL COMPONENT FOR GAUGING CITIZENS' PRIORITIES AROUND
EBOLA (WORKPLAN 1.8.1.2.)

Throughout the quarter the SMS platform continued to be used to gauge listeners' perceptions of the Ebola crisis—specifically on pressing issues including the opening of schools and risks of complacency. Below are examples of Ebola-related questions created and aired by the four stations:

Radio Kintoma (Lofa County):

What do you think is best to do in empowering/helping Ebola Survivors in Lofa? (from January)

Options	# of SMS	Percentage
A) Send them to school/vocational School	38	32.2%
B) Give them money to make business	53	45%
C) Give them job	27	23%
Total	118	100%

Where is the most preferable place to take people who have Ebola symptoms? (from February)

Options	# of SMS	Percentage
A) Hospital	101	36.7%
B) Town Hall	19	6.9%
C) ETU	155	56.36%
Total	275	100%

Super Bongese (Bong County):

Do you support the reopening of school in February looking at the fear of Ebola? (from January)

Options	SMSs	Percentages
Yes	13	23.6%
No	42	76.4%
Total	55	100%

Is it true that Ebola is finished in Liberia? (from February)

Options	# of SMSs	Percentage
Yes	59	45.38%
No	71	54.62%
Total	130	100%

Are recently opened schools in Bong County following the anti-Ebola protocols like washing hands, taking students' temperature, sitting distance apart, among others? (from March)

Options	SMSs	Percentages
Y) Yes	77	74.8%
N) No	26	25.2%
Total	103	100%

Magic FM (Grand Bassa County):

Is it safe to welcome Ebola survivors back in our communities? (from February)

Options	SMSs	Percentages
Yes	51	61.4%
No	32	38.6%
Total	83	100%

Radio Kergheamahn (Nimba County):

Though kicking Ebola out of Liberia is making some gains, is it wise to host the inter-county (football competition) now? (from March)

Options	SMSs	Percentages
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Yes	27	44.3%
No	34	55.7%
Total	61	100%

In March, and for the first time since August of last year, several of the hubs began to use the Opinion Poll to gauge citizens' perceptions on issues other than Ebola. This change points to a general shift towards normalcy as the Ebola crisis has largely subsided and Liberia is close to achieving its goal of zero cases for 42 days. Below are some examples:

Radio Kintoma (Lofa County)

It has been noticed that betting games are on the increase in Lofa and school going age kids are hugely involved. Is this healthy for the future of our county?

Options	SMSs	Percentages
Yes	6	10.2%
No	53	89.8%
Total	59	100%

Magic FM (Grand Bassa County)

What is the best way to stop the sea from encroaching on the land?

Options	SMSs	Percentages
A) Stop beach sand mining	53	68%
B) Stop people from building on beach land	13	16.7%
C) Cover the water edge with rocks	12	15.4%
Total	78	100%

5.7.2. ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY OF SMS INITIATIVE (WORKPLAN 1.8.3.)

IREX and LMC have long planned to transition the four hub operators to Frontline SMS or an alternative open source platform so as to enhance the sustainability of the platform. The ideal platform would not be dependent on the Internet, does not require a service environment, will exhibit graphical analysis of the data usage of the platform and will be user friendly, particularly for low literacy environments. IREX and the LMC met with the IT team at iLab in March to discuss their potential role in facilitating the transition to Frontline and learned that they do not have the necessary familiarity with the Opinion Poll component of the platform to be useful to our transition process at this stage. A follow-on phone conversation was held between Frontline SMS in Washington DC and IREX, and it appears that the Platform does have the capabilities to achieve what IREX is looking for. Assuming that IREX is able to move forward with the Cost Extension, this transition to Frontline with guidance from the Frontline team in DC will occur in May and June.

5.8. OBJECTIVE SEVEN: (WORKPLAN 1.9.)

5.8.1. SUPPORT DISSEMINATION OF EBOLA-RELATED INFORMATION (WORKPLAN 1.9.1.)

5.8.1.1. ASSIST IN DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF GOVERNMENT'S EBOLA COMMUNICATION STRATEGY (WORKPLAN 1.9.1.1.)

TCC/ATI assisted in the planning of 47 (forty-seven) Ebola press briefings featuring 51 (fifty-one) speakers, including the UNMEER head and key members of the Incidence Management System and high government officials.

The Carter Center Access to Information Team (TCC/ATI) continued to support implementation of the Liberian Government's Ebola Communication Strategy, attending large weekly gatherings of key partners and information holders, as well as serving on the Technical Secretariat which manages more detailed communication planning. As part of this work, TCC/ATI helped the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs, and Tourism (MICAT) plan weekly Ebola briefings. To support government efforts to be more open regarding the use of Ebola resources, the Technical Secretariat and larger communication committee endorsed a TCC/ATI drafted proposal to request that heads of government ministries and agencies addressing MICAT's Daily Ebola Briefings include updates on the management of Ebola resources within their agencies. This quarter, TCC/ATI assisted in the planning of 47 briefings featuring 51 speakers, including the head of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER), key members of Liberia's Incidence Management System, and various officials from MICAT, the Ministries of Education, Health, etc.

Over the quarter, TCC/ATI and key partners also continued to roll out the "Ebola Must Go" campaign that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf launched in December, 2014. Partners helped mobilize communities, air jingles, erect bill boards, and print banners and flyers to keep the public informed about Ebola's continuing threat despite the drastic reduction of cases in the country. As part of this work, TCC/ATI met with the Publishers Association to coordinate publication of the materials and supported broad distribution of the materials by utilizing existing community networks. To date, 50 banners/sign boards were posted and 600 buttons and 6,000 bumper stickers were distributed through road transport unions at the county level.

5.8.1.2. SUPPORT CRSS TO DISSEMINATE GOVERNMENT EBOLA BRIEFINGS (WORKPLAN 1.9.1.2.)

Daily Ebola briefing excerpts were regularly distributed to 12 (twelve) CRSS reaching thousands of listeners across 8 (eight) counties.

To ensure MICAT briefings reached the county-level, TCC/ATI supported the MICAT Public Affairs Department to capture and share 39 key excerpts from the daily Ebola briefings with 12 community radio stations across 8 counties—Bong, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Nimba, River Gee, River Cess, and Rural Montserrado—that were aired to thousands of local constituents. TCC/ATI continued to share the Ebola situation updates with community radio stations in these regions to keep them abreast of discussions at the highest level of the government and partners fighting to rid the country of Ebola.

5.8.2. ENGAGE COUNTY FOI NETWORKS IN FIGHT AGAINST EBOLA (WORKPLAN 1.9.2.)

5.8.2.1. SUPPORT COUNTY FOI NETWORKS TO ASSURE LOCAL DISSEMINATION OF EBOLA-RELATED INFORMATION (WORKPLAN 1.9.2.1.)

More than 30 meetings were held and 15 radio programs aired by the FOI Network emphasizing the FOI law and its use to promote accountability of Ebola resources.

TCC/ATI continued to provide technical assistance to seven county FOI Networks that serve on county-level Ebola task forces in an effort to share prevention and resource information and Daily Ebola Briefing excerpts, as well as encourage use of FOI for governmental accountability during a time of national crisis. Additionally, TCC/ATI met with the network coordinators to discuss the need to capture activities and project impact, continue timely submission of reports, and increase network visibility through heightened outreach. Examples of FOI network efforts over the quarter include:

BONG

- Appeared on Radio Gbarnga and Super Bongese, emphasizing the need for citizens and civil society actors to test the FOI law by writing letters of requests to agencies that provide basic social services in the county
- Reorganized FOI clubs in the various high schools in Gbarnga and nearby districts
- Met with the County Health Team to discuss the need and means of increasing proactive disclosure of information about benefit payments for health workers. The meeting came in the face of criticisms that there is no information on risk and hazard benefits for health workers and that many were aggrieved and threatening to boycott. Following the meeting, the network coordinated a town hall meeting to provide new information regarding the Health Team's plans to pay one month of USD\$300 in hazard benefits for health workers who volunteered during the height of the Ebola epidemic after other workers left.

GRAND BASSA

- Conducted four meetings with local leaders, moderators of community discussion centers, marketers, drivers' union members, motorbike riders, women's organizations, and youth groups, emphasizing the importance of FOI requests related to the use of Ebola resources, and to redress steps when requests are denied; the District Superintendent of Neekreen attended and called for increased FOI awareness in his district.
- Appeared on Radio Wee and Magic Radio to discuss redress steps in the case of denied requests; callers requested copies of the FOI law and expressed joy for such a law
- Met with civil society actors interested in using FOI to learn why certain projects in the county have been abandoned and how to file requests for information
- Held seven FOI trainings on filing requests for information in Kpelle Town, New Buchanan Community, and District #2, emphasizing the need to make requests for information on Ebola funding and materials
- Met with the #3 District Superintendent and his office staff to explain the value of FOI and the need to proactively disclose information and respond to FOI requests

GRAND GEDEH

- Aired radio jingles on Smile FM to promote FOI and asked the community to observe Ebola prevention measures
- Met with the County Development Superintendent to share TCC/ATI work to promote accountability of Ebola resources through FOI requests; the Superintendent praised the network for its work on the task force and its leadership on transparency issues in the county and asked for increased awareness about the law
- Attended regular county Ebola task force meetings and helped implement information sharing activities, including school visits to inform students and teachers to continue observing Ebola protocols in schools
- Attended Ebola education meetings and cautioned partners to continue providing key information about their activities to the public

LOFA

- Trained youth group on importance of FOI and procedures for making information requests in response to a request by callers on the local community radio station (the majority of the youth were government school teachers often in conflict about the status of their salaries)
- Held radio awareness on the Voice of Lofa to explain the value of FOI and provide an overview on how to file requests for information, as part of local efforts to educate parents who have raised concerns about the use of Parent-Teacher Association fees; after the show, three parents asked for help in drafting FOI requests
- Raised the need for proactive disclosure of information at a major meeting of the County Ebola Coordinating team, in order to dispel rumors

NIMBA

- Held a meeting with the Assistant Development Superintendent, to promote accountability of Ebola resources (Nimba had given US\$ 10,000 to the Ganta Ebola Task force to help fight Ebola); during the meeting, the Asst. Superintendent provided a breakdown of the use of the funds on transportation, burial, medical supplies, and food
- Carried out various awareness activities among vulnerable groups, including women, to promote Ebola resource accountability and FOI use
- Supported county leadership and the local Ebola task force in implementing activities to prevent further spread of Ebola, including serving as part of the county delegation to Loala, Guinea for a border coordination meeting attended by the Superintendent of Nimba County, the Nimba Development Superintendent, the County Inspector, the Sanniquellie City Major, the Nimba Gender Coordinator, the Liberia Red Cross, Radio Nimba, UNMIL, and the County Health officer, in addition to the Guinea delegation; during the meeting, a joint Ebola Emergency unit that monitors and tracks cases from across the border was discussed, and the network coordinator spoke of the important role information plays in fighting Ebola; following the meeting, the network supported Radio Nimba to air the main points of the discussion between Liberian and Guinean authorities in fighting Ebola transmission at the border

RIVER GEE

- Held a meeting among Kronowken youths on the importance of FOI law and how it can be used to speed up development projects and ensure accountability for Ebola resources
- Launched the radio program, “Ebola Resource Accountability Forum,” on Radio Gee, during which Deputy Information Minister Isaac Jackson spoke about the GOL’s commitment to greater accountability; the Incidence Management System’s report on allocations and use of Ebola resources; and the need for county authorities and line ministries to properly account for resources, proactively disseminate information, and respond to FOI requests for information
- Raised awareness about the Ebola Resource Accountability Forum at two programs organized by the Federation of Liberian Youths (FLY) for over 120 local authorities, business managers, and students
- Encouraged use of the FOI law at an Association of River Gee Youths event
- Met with three communities in Sarbo District to share information about accounting of Ebola resources by public agencies, such as the usage of \$100,000LD given to the district from the County Development Fund to fight Ebola
- Hosted eight radio talk shows, raising awareness about the FOI law and sharing county success stories
- Supported proactive disclosure by the Ministries of Agriculture and Labor through radio shows during which line ministry heads spoke of their work, progress made, and challenges facing them
- Met with county leadership, including the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and members of the County's Commissioner Council, to discuss the importance of accounting for Ebola resources, proactive disclosure, and timely response to requests for information

RURAL MONTSERRADO

- Collaborated with the Self-help Initiative for Sustainable Development and ZOA to distribute Ebola materials and related information in Crozierville to people in the rural areas
- Held an awareness meeting for leaders in White Plains Township during which some participants who had heard about the FOI law shared their experiences in using the law to access information about Ebola funds received by their various townships, indicating that their involvement in the fight of Ebola was a result of accessing information from their local leaders

5.8.2.2. SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK LOOP (WORKPLAN 1.9.2.2.)

Over the quarter TCC/ATI county FOI Networks continued to share community feedback with local/national government agencies on the effectiveness of Ebola interventions. Following various meetings and events with community members, FOI network coordinators shared feedback with their respective County Ebola Task Forces as well as with the TCC/ATI Senior Project Coordinator who passed on local concerns to national-level officials during weekly Technical Communication Secretariat meetings and larger partner meetings. Communities often expressed concerns about the use of Ebola-related resources and the need for greater accountability, as well as additional support and resources to better fight against Ebola. Additionally, concerns were expressed about low awareness and turnout for regular, non-Ebola, immunizations as community members confused immunizations with the Ebola vaccine trial. Low turnout was reported in Lofa, Margibi, and Nimba counties. With this information from the counties, the Communication Committee was able to meet with the social mobilization team to discuss challenges and better means of communication about various immunization programs.

5.8.3. SUPPORT COORDINATION AMONG KEY FOI STAKEHOLDERS (WORKPLAN 1.9.3.)

5.8.3.1. FACILITATE COORDINATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND MEDIA OUTLETS AND JOURNALIST ASSOCIATIONS (WORKPLAN 1.9.3.1.)

Following TCC/ATI's assistance in the last quarter to convene government and media outlets and assist in finalizing a memorandum of understanding between the two parties, TCC/ATI did not explicitly convene the government and media this quarter. However, TCC/ATI continued to ensure engagement of national and local media representatives at various stakeholder meetings.

5.8.3.2. CONVENE MEETINGS BETWEEN KEY STAKEHOLDERS (WORKPLAN 1.9.3.1.)

Steps for increased information coordination and sharing on accounting for Ebola resources and use of FOI as an instrument for this were agreed upon at a high-level meeting of government and civil society representatives.

TCC/ATI, in collaboration with MICAT, convened a meeting of government and civil society representatives to discuss the need and means of accounting for Ebola resources. Thirty-five participants attended, including the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commissioner, the Deputy Information Minister for Public Affairs, the Ministry of Education Comptroller, Ministry of Internal Affairs' Information Officer, and several civil society leaders. Deputy Information Minister Isaac Jackson presided over the discussions and emphasized the importance of accounting for Ebola funds and resources and thanked TCC/ATI for complementing the efforts of the government. TCC/ATI Project Lead highlighted the value of the FOI law as an instrument that guarantees the public's right to know and important for curtailing corruption. Participating public institutions presented on their respective roles in furthering accountability for Ebola resources. Participants sought clarification on allocations made by Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) at the county level, and the MIA Information officer provided copies of the amounts per county, explaining that counties requested funds from MIA, and MIA provided approval for withdrawal of funds from the County and Social Development Funds. The Ministry of Education received a substantial number of inquiries, mainly on plans for reopening schools. The stakeholders agreed to the following as the next steps for increased information coordination and sharing:

- Government institutions will continue to improve access to information by proactively disclosing information and giving timely responses to requests for information.
- Government and civil society leaders will continue to consult and share experiences on issues of proactive disclosure of Ebola related information.
- The LACC and the CSOs will continue to collaborate in promoting accountability and transparency more broadly and in relation to Ebola resources.
- TCC/ATI will follow up with civil society participants to determine their information needs and help them transmit information requests to government agencies, the Communication Committee, and the Deputy

Information Minister for Public Affairs in order to better understand proactive disclosure needs and inform guest selection and content of MICAT Daily Ebola Briefings.

- Civil Society activists will continue to file requests for information on the use of Ebola resources.
- TCC/ATI will continue to distribute the key points of MICAT briefings and Sitrep updates to CSOs in addition to media institutions and journalists.

Also during the quarter, TCC/ATI assisted the River Gee FOI Network to host a large stakeholder convening among government officials, CSO/CBOs, and local radio journalists to discuss the role of FOI in the fight against Ebola and consider ways to increase proactive disclosure. Participants agreed to the following action points submitted to the offices of the County Superintendent and Line Ministry Heads:

- All county line ministries should appoint information officers and draft/share publication schemes that are updated regularly with current information as required by the FOI law.
- County leadership should brief the public on a monthly basis via radio.
- Public officials should answer FOI requests within the statutory period.
- Public information officers should increase FOI awareness.
- Citizens should increase use of the FOI law.

5.8.4. CONTINUE DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING FOI TRACKING SYSTEM (WORKPLAN 1.9.4.)

5.8.4.1. SUPPORT LFIC TO ESTABLISH TRACKING SYSTEM AND RAISE AWARENESS (WORKPLAN 1.9.4.1.)

Over the quarter, TCC/ATI finalized a full draft of the STAM-FOI manual and accompanying annexes. The draft manual is currently being reviewed by field staff and is expected to be finalized and the system implemented in April/early May. The TCC/ATI Senior Project Coordinator continued to meet with the LFIC coordinator to plan for testing and awareness raising of the tracking system. Under the plan, the LFIC secretariat will utilize member organizations to share information about the STAM-FOI and accompanying FOI hotline during the various events they hold and attend.

5.8.4.2. COORDINATORS FOLLOW-UP WITH CSOS AND CRSS FOR REQUESTS AND RESPONSES (WORKPLAN 1.9.4.2.)

Coordinators assisted citizens in filing 12 (twelve) FOI requests, of which 5 (five) were answered during the quarter. FOI clubs were established in 4 (four) Lofa County high schools.

With the drastic drop in the number of Ebola infections, County FOI Network coordinators shifted focus over the quarter to provide support to CSOs/CBOs to make requests for information on regular community development issues, as well as in relation to the use of Ebola resources. Examples of FOI requests and responses, if available, over the quarter are as follows:

BONG

- Following a capacity building workshop held by the local TCC/ATI FOI networks, students of Dolokelen Gboveh High School—a school with limited teachers and lacking a toilet facility, library, laboratory, chairs, instructional materials—filed a request with the District Education Officer for a list of government instructors assigned to the school and the school's budgetary allocation during the 2014/15 fiscal year after students were charged fees to hire volunteer teachers. Additionally, two members of the school FOI club were hosted by Radio Gbarnga and highlighted the plight of their school and their FOI request to the DEO.

- After a training by the local FOI network and in response to encroachment on school property by several residents, the N. V. Massaquoi FOI Club wrote a FOI request to the resident county surveyor to learn the quantity of land owned by the school.

GRAND BASSA

- The network filed and tracked FOI requests to the Neekreen District Superintendent and the local Ministry of Health Administrator for a copy of a report on funding and resources received by the county for Ebola response/prevention efforts.

GRAND GEDEH

- The local network supported Karlewella Town members to file and track a FOI request on the three-year delay in payment to the community of land rental fees by the Euro Logging Company. The Managing Director of the Forestry Development Authority responded to the request during a town hall meeting, providing information related to the delay and explaining that the funds are still available. During the meeting, community members set up a sub-committee to draft a proposal for use of the funds in line with community priorities, for submission to the FDA and the logging company.
- The network assisted the Civil Society Council in filing and tracking a FOI request to county authorities and the Grand Gedeh Legislative Caucus for the list of projects undertaken during the 2013/14 fiscal year with the county development funds. The information was provided to the Council, and the local FOI network facilitated a presentation of the information to the public at the Amu-Wulu Forum, attended by representatives from the GOL, CSOs, UNMIL, and community leadership. The information also was aired live on Smile Radio. Further, FOI network members joined the Civil Society Council in traveling to Jarwodee to verify information in the county's response and observed that on the ground realities differed from the information received. The network and Council will share the findings with the county authority and public for further discussion.

LOFA

- The network held a radio show that discussed request making and follow up, during which the network shared the government's announcement of tuition-free school, igniting debate among parents who have paid fees to schools for their kids to attend. Many parents requested assistance from the network to write and file requests for information to the County Education Officer on the government's tuition-free school initiative. Following this, the network worked with the deans of four high schools (Kintoma, Voinjama Multilateral, Free Pentecostal, and Voinjama Public School) to establish FOI clubs. Twenty-four students from the four schools were recruited into clubs and were provided copies of the FOI law. Other schools are now requesting the local network to establish FOI clubs in their schools.

NIMBA

- The network held a community meeting in Bahn on the value of FOI and how to file requests for information. Following the meeting, the network coordinator and the Chairman of Bahn Youths held a show on Voice of Bahn Radio to further share information on how to file FOI requests.

RIVER GEE

- The network filed and tracked a FOI request to the County Health Team for a breakdown of expenditures against the LD 4.1 million distributed by the national government for Ebola response/prevention within the county during the month of August 2014. Similar requests were submitted to the Office of the Superintendent, the Project Management Committee, and the County Ebola Taskforce for an account of the USD 75,000 taken from the County Development Funds. Following the requests and other engagements by the network to highlight the need for increased accountability and transparency around Ebola-related resources, the county authority

released the long-awaited expenditure report of the USD 75,000 withdrawn from the CDF to fight Ebola in the county.

- The network filed a request with the Ministry of Health for an internal review after the Ministry failed to respond to a request for information filed in February.
- The network met with the Development Superintendent to advance the issue of the huge number of abandoned, failed, and pending projects and to learn how these challenges will be addressed. The superintendent indicated that his office will tour the projects in question to assess their progress and make recommendations to his bosses, and worked with the network to set a date in early April for the general public to carry out the reviews and share the information.
- Since 2009, a local construction organization was contracted by the central government through the Ministry of Justice to construct the 15TH Judiciary Circuit Court in Fishtown, River Gee. The building is at roof level and was abandoned for reasons unknown to the public. The network filed a request with the Ministry through the County Attorney Office requesting reasons for the abandonment.
- The network supported two county citizens to file and track a FOI request with the County's Sports Committee for a detailed report on local expenditures on sports infrastructure and events. While the Committee did not respond directly, it appeared on Radio Gee's "Face 2 Face" talk show to read out the expenditure breakdown of the USD \$30,000 it received and provided copies of the report to the media.

RURAL MONTSERRADO

- The network assisted the Women Facilitator Group to make and track a request for information on the amount of items that were distributed and the intended beneficiaries for Ebola-prevention purposes. Following receipt of the information, the network further disseminated the information among participants of local meetings, and created awareness about the use of the FOI law to obtain information about local Ebola activities and resources.

5.8.4.3. COUNTY COORDINATORS SHARE TRACKING DATA WITH LFIC (WORKPLAN 1.9.4.3.)

County FOI Coordinators continued to share request tracking data with the LFIC, through TCC/ATI, in anticipation of gearing up the STAM-FOI within the coming months. Over the quarter, ATI coordinators shared over 50 requests for information with the LFIC from the 7 target counties.

5.8.5. PROVIDE FOI TRAINING FOR CSO NETWORK LEADERS (WORKPLAN 1.9.5.)

5.8.5.1. DEVELOP TRAINING OF TRAINERS MANUAL (WORKPLAN 1.9.5.1.)

Over the quarter, TCC/ATI began gathering content and drafting the Training of Trainers manual. It is expected that the TOT will be finalized in May. Additionally, TCC/ATI undertook activities in support of capacity building for civil society leaders and the public in general. During the month, the Senior Project Coordinator appeared on Fabric Radio with the Administrator of the Independent Information Commission and the Executive Director of CEMESP discuss the stakeholders' various FOI-related efforts and address callers' questions about recent advancements. The value of access to information, the process for filing requests, exemptions, and the purpose and processes of the Independent Information Commission also was discussed.

Additionally, TCC/ATI supported the PUL to hold its annual congress and fulfill one of its objectives to raise further awareness among journalists about the value of the FOI law and encourage greater use. The Senior Project Coordinator discussed the law and provided examples of how FOI can be used to strengthen investigative reporting.

5.8.6. PROVIDE SUPPORT TO CSOS TO UNDERGO THEMATIC CAMPAIGNS (WORKPLAN 1.9.6.)

5.8.6.1. DEVELOP THEMATIC CAMPAIGNS, INCLUDING POTENTIAL FOR INCORPORATING EBOLA RESOURCE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY (WORKPLAN 1.9.6.1.)

With support from TCC/ATI, CEMESP is following up with community members trained under its thematic campaign in Bong and Grand Bassa Counties. The trainees are expected to review their county-specific Ebola resources, government response processes, and services that could generate questions for FOI request filing. The trainees already wrote the requests for information. To date, there have not been any responses. As the statutory time has elapsed, CEMESP has aided the two networks in filing Internal Review applications to the Chairpersons of the Ebola Response Task forces. Additionally, CEMESP has provided support to the networks to engage their local media to generate discussion around the requests and the delayed responses. CEMESP is drafting a wider media advisory for circulation in mainstream media to draw the attention of the National Ebola Taskforce in order to bring pressure on the county-based Task Forces to disclose the information.

5.8.7. MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLICATION (WORKPLAN 1.9.7.)

TCC/ATI developed the STAM-FOI and TOT manuals during this quarter.

5.9. OBJECTIVE EIGHT (WORKPLAN 1.10.)

5.9.1. VOTE SMART VANS (WORKPLAN 1.10.2.)

5.9.1.1. ROLL-OUT OF VSVS IN 15 COUNTIES (WORKPLAN 1.10.2.1.)

5.9.1.1.1. PRODUCE FINAL DOCUMENTARY (WORKPLAN 1.9.2.1.2.)

The IREX Senior Program Manager worked with the NAYMOTE team in the early part of the quarter to complete their final report and documentary for the Vote Smart Van project. The final report is included with this report as Attachment 6, and the final documentary titled “Our Road to Democracy” can be viewed via the following link: <https://youtu.be/pQ8PJNzfCkA>.

5.9.2. SPECIAL ELECTION GRANTS (WORKPLAN 1.10.3.)

5.9.2.1. PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FUNDING IN EACH RPS’ GRANT TO DISTRIBUTE TO CSOS FOR ELECTION ACTIVITIES (WORKPLAN 1.10.3.1.)

When the YMCA stopped its essay writing tournament (see section 5.9.2.2.), it still had funds remaining that it converted to youth forums on elections and peace. When the election period was significantly reduced in December, the YMCA was only able to hold two of the intended four forums. Thus it was decided to change plans again and conduct two youth interactive forums on the Constitution Review process, one in Lofa County and one in Nimba County. The forums’ goal is to enhance youths’ understanding of the Liberian Constitution and the revision process by giving them the space for engaging with a representative of the Constitution Review Committee in a forum specifically for young people. All the preparatory work was completed at the end of the quarter, and the two forums were scheduled for early April.

5.9.2.2. CONDUCT ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS (WORKPLAN 1.10.3.2.)

Because of the school closing during the Ebola crisis, the YMCA was told by county education officials to discontinue the work it had begun with students and coaches for an essay writing tournament. They re-programmed their funds to carry out other activities, as discussed in section 5.9.2.1. above.

5.9.3. JOURNALISM TRAININGS (WORKPLAN 1.10.4.)

5.9.3.1. GIRLS' MEDIA FRONTIERS (WORKPLAN 1.10.4.3.)

5.9.3.1.1. GMF PARTICIPANTS PRODUCE AND EDIT VIDEO/RADIO CONTENT (WORKPLAN 1.10.4.3.2.)

Power Television aired 3 (three) videos produced by GMF reporters.

In January, Power Television aired three videos produced by the Girls Media Frontiers. The first video, which aired on January 10, featured stories on the national Ebola burial site, the Constitution Review process, and the certification of the newly elected senators.

On January 24, the station aired the second video featuring the swearing-in of the new senators, a roundtable discussion on Female Genital Mutilation, and interviews with the new Senators on their plans for their communities.

The third video, aired January 31, featured President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's annual address to the Legislature, a Médecins Sans Frontières update on Ebola cases, citizens' perceptions on the case of the 12-year-old girl who bled to death from rape, and Paynesville City's launch of an Ebola Awareness Campaign in collaboration with the United Nations Mission for Emergency Ebola Response (UNMEER).

Activities under the GMF program ended January 31, 2015, but the young women continued to produce stories for LWDR and their local stations.

5.9.4. WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT (WORKPLAN 1.10.7.)

5.9.4.1. PROMOTE WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT IN POLITICAL PROCESS AND DECISION MAKING PROCESSES (WORKPLAN 1.10.7.1.)

5.9.4.1.1. CONDUCT LIVE INTERVIEWS WITH WOMEN TO DETERMINE THEIR VIEWS ON PROPOSED ELECTION DATE AND EBOLA RESPONSE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES (WORKPLAN 1.10.7.1.4.)

Twelve (12) community radio stations produced and aired programs featuring interviews with women about their participation in the election process.

To document and highlight women's views on the electoral processes and Ebola response, twelve community radio stations in nine counties completed programs in January focused on capturing women's participation in the Special Senatorial Election process. The interviews included conversations with female voters, community leaders, and spokespersons from the National Election Commission and International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). These interviews were aired on community radio stations, and CD recordings were produced to be distributed to key actors in the electoral process to inform future planning.

5.9.4.2. FINAL ROUNDTABLE/REPORT (WORKPLAN 1.10.7.2.)

5.9.4.2.1. CONSULTANT TO DEVELOP ELECTION REPORT DOCUMENTING RESULTS OF INDICATORS AND ANALYZING WOMEN'S INCLUSION AND BARRIERS TO INFORM 2017 PROCESS (WORKPLAN 1.10.7.2.1.)

WONGOSOL had several setbacks in delivering the report on women's inclusion in the election. ECOMSUL, the consulting firm contracted to do the work, reported in January that they could not get data they needed from the Election Coordinating Committee (ECC), which focused on monitoring the polls on Election Day. WONGOSOL held follow-up meetings with the ECC and its field monitors and was able to provide data to ECOMSUL in February, and ECOMSUL provided a draft in March. The IREX Gender and Youth Manager and Senior Program Manager found that the report did not meet the standards set in the grant agreement and held a feedback meeting with WONGOSOL, which asked the consultant to make the necessary revisions.

Meanwhile, WONGOSOL worked on the final guest list and the program for the report launch scheduled for early April.

5.9.5. ELECTION COORDINATION COMMITTEE (WORKPLAN 1.10.8.)

5.9.5.1. ELECTION-DAY MONITORING (WORKPLAN 1.10.8.2.)

5.9.5.1.1. PRODUCE COMPREHENSIVE OBSERVATION REPORT (WORKPLAN 1.10.8.2.3.)

The IREX Senior Program Manager worked with the Election Coordination Committee (ECC) in January and February to complete their final report from their Special Senatorial Election activities. The final version of the report was submitted on March 20th, and is included with this report as Attachment 7.

5.10. OBJECTIVE NINE: (WORKPLAN 1.11.)

5.10.1. ENSURE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISES (WORKPLAN 1.11.1.)

5.10.1.1. PROVIDE FOCUSED MENTORING IN SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT FOR AWARD WINNERS AND NON- WINNERS (WORKPLAN 1.11.1.1.)

Eight (5 CRSs & 3 CSOs) social enterprises (SEs) have met all requirements and started operating businesses

The RSC Team conducted mentoring visits to the nine SE winners. EARS for the Masses could not implement its SE grant because a long running internal conflict led the staff who have worked with CSML to separate and form a new CSO.

During mentoring visits, RSC staff helped the SEs to organize their financial records, such as receipts and income and expenditure ledgers, and to properly record and itemize purchases made for their social enterprises (SEs). The organizations had established an operational ledger with up-to-date expenditures and had in place financial forms and documents to ensure financial control, including receipts and invoices. The RSC Team also conducted reconciliation of the SE accounts so that account balances are clear to allow for adequate planning. Eight of the nine grant-winning partners (5 CRSs and 3 CSOs) have met all requirements and started operating their SEs.

The RSC team with support from the RSC Coordinator assisted Inter-Visionary Artists (IVA) and Super Bongese Radio to develop plans for the delivery of their trainings, which are key aspects of their SEs.

A new contract was signed between IREX and Building Markets (BM) to provide mentoring and training support to sixteen SEs and staff of the RSC. The services will include roll out and management to the nine winning organizations and identification of funding opportunities for the seven non-winners.

BM along with Samuka Konneh made visits to the winning organizations to support them in rolling out their SE plans. They reviewed invoices, bank statements, receipts and other financial records of the SEs, making sure they matched their plans. It was noted that Inter-Visionary Artists (IVA) Radio Karn, and Aiding Disadvantaged and Traumatized Women and Girls (ADWANGA) have all employed Finance Officers to help them record all transactions concerning the SEs separate from their regular operating finances. (See Attachments 8-11).

Below are highlights from Konneh's recent assessment of the Nimba-based SEs:

- Radio Karn's enterprise is well set up and is generating revenues. Its production studio is providing services including production of radio programs and jingles for PSI on Ebola. Other SEs such as BOTPAL rely on Karn's Stationery Store to produce their documents and use their studio to do radio promotion.

- Botanical Products Association of Liberia has begun purchasing its agro-produce such as seed rice and oil. There are around 100 five-gallon containers of palm oil and several bags of seed rice available and stocked. Although they are for resale, BOTPAL thinks the time is not yet ripe for making profits.
- IVA has begun its youth training program but enrolment is very low. It projected in its business plan an enrolment of 50 trainees per cycle but currently there are only ten. Fourteen youth registered, but four dropped from the training. With these challenges, the entity has rejuvenated its “Digging Out Hidden Talents” program in schools in Ganta to attract young people once again to the arts, and this will also serve as a revenue source to make up for the drop in projections.
- Radio Kergheamahn is still waiting to receive the offsite broadcast (OB) equipment that is being shipped to Liberia as part of their SE grant. IREX is providing assistance in clearing it through Liberian Customs. In the meantime, the enterprise is using its public address system not only to engage the public but also to generate revenue. Bank records show deposits of money generated by the enterprise.
- Radio Sehnwai’s enterprise is open, but progress is slow. At first, Sehnwai had difficulty differentiating the social enterprise from the mother organization, leading staff to inappropriately use resources that could have generated revenues for the enterprise. For example, printing and photocopying were done free of charge, and the motorbike was used for private use. Since the RSC and BM’s most recent assessment and engagement, the SE has begun generating more income from these assets.
- ADWANGA’s social enterprise has not yet opened for business although it has acquired all of its items, equipment and services such as insurance. Renovation work on the enterprise center is completed except for painting. ADWANGA is expected to start running its business in April.

5.10.2. PROMOTE ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PARTNER CSOS/CRSS (WORKPLAN 1.11.2.)

The RSC team and the Social Impact M&E Manager conducted the year five organizational capacity assessment (OCA) for the 17 regional CSOs and CRSSs. Conduct strategic planning for all CSOs and CRSSs (WORKPLAN 1.11.2.1.1.)

5.10.3. ENHANCE IMPACT OF THE REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTER (WORKPLAN 1.11.3.)

5.10.3.1. IMPROVE UTILIZATION OF THE CENTER AND RESOURCE BASE OF THE 17 CSOS AND CRSS (WORKPLAN 1.11.3.1.)

The RSC team is making efforts to publicize and encourage non-regular users to visit the center since its reopening following the Ebola crisis. Publicity was done through radio announcements on Super Bongese, Radio Bong and other stations in Ganta; distribution of flyers to organizations and institutions in Gbarnga and Nimba; and verbal communication with partners during mentoring visits. Despite these measures, they have not received any visitors. The team also realized that Gbarnga was hard hit by the Ebola crisis, and people and organizations have still not started operating to their full capacity.

5.10.4. EXIT STRATEGY FOR DEN-L AND THE RSC (WORKPLAN 1.11.5.)

5.10.4.1. HOLD MEETING WITH DEN-L TO DISCUSS RSC SUSTAINABILITY (WORKPLAN 1.11.5.1.)

A meeting was held between RSC Coordinator and the Executive Director of DEN-L to discuss the possibility of moving the Resource Support Center to the city center of Gbarnga. The ED thought it was a good idea and would likely contribute to the sustainability of the center, but wanted to ensure that expectations were clear as to how the move will take place, the various costs involved, ongoing maintenance and management of the center in the city, security and sustainability. She promised to discuss the idea with DEN-L’s management team and get back to IREX with an official response. If the cost extension is approved this will likely be done to increase access for community members and the target beneficiaries.

5.11 EBOLA-RELATED ACTIVITIES (WORKPLAN 1.7.)

As noted in the last quarterly report, three of CSML's resource partners applied for and won grants from the Mercy Corps E-CAP program. They involved five more CSML partner CSOs as subgrantees, continuing the strong partnership that has developed between mentee organizations and their mentoring partners. In addition, six more CSOs receiving capacity building assistance through CSML won E-CAP grants. All fourteen organizations worked throughout the quarter carrying out Ebola activities in their communities.

5.11.1. PROMOTE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS-RAISING THROUGH COMMUNITY OUTREACH (WORKPLAN 1.7.1.)

5.11.1.1. HOLD FORUMS WITH COMMUNITY LEADERS (WORKPLAN 1.7.1.2.)

Nine (9) new communities in Montserrado, Bomi and Margibi Counties held community leaders' forums and developed action plans for tackling the difficult issues facing them.

Partners worked with 60 (sixty) communities following up on their action plans.

NAYMOTE and AGENDA held a total of nine community leaders' forums, AGENDA at Island Clinic and Weasay communities in Montserrado County, and NAYMOTE in Montserrado, Bomi, and Margibi Counties. The forums brought together community leaders and citizens to discuss Ebola related issues and identify steps they could take to address them. The topics were changing as the disease incidence lessened; a common topic during the quarter was whether the schools were ready to protect their children while holding classes.

Other partners that had facilitated CLFs followed up with the communities to encourage and assist in their continued work on their action plans.

5.11.1.2. CONDUCT "I KNOW MY RIGHTS" FORUMS TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S NARRATIVES ON EBOLA AND ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION (WORKPLAN 1.7.1.4.)

Two hundred and eighty-five (285) people (219 females; 66 males attended ten (10) "I Know my Rights" Forums in Montserrado County on reducing stigmatization of Ebola survivors and focusing on rape.

Teen pregnancy, rape, care for Ebola orphans and stigmatization of Ebola survivors were the focus of the "I Know my Rights" forums in Montserrado County.

Two forums held on January 21 and 23 attracted 54 people (42 women, 12 men). The first forum was held on Capital Bye-Pass, where participants discussed "Right to Information and Economic Opportunities." Participants learned about the Freedom of Information Law and how they can use it to advocate on issues that affect them. Alphonso Zeon, of the Carter Center's TCC, facilitated the forum. Most of the participants said they knew nothing about FOI. The women said they were interested in the public/private loan scheme available to rural women. They said many of their counterparts in the rural women's network have difficulty accessing macro loans and other financial packages. They expressed interest in using FOI to find out about these loans and how they have benefitted other women.

Rape was the focus of the second forum at Chocolate City in Gardnesville. Varnetta Johnson Freeman of LIWOMAC facilitated the forum. She told participants about the definition of rape under the Liberian law and discussed the various forms of sexual violence. Some men said women used rape allegations to entrap them and send them to jail.

Seventy-two people (60 women, 12 men) attended three forums held February 2nd, 6th and 25th on the "Denial of Pregnancy and its Impact on Young Women" in Barnesville. Participants watched a drama on the topic and followed it with discussion. The crowd, comprising mostly young women, was urged to avoid early sex and the risks associated with it. A police spokesman reminded participants that fathers have a legal obligation to pay child support. He urged young men to stop providing rooms or apartments to other men for sexual activities with young girls.

The “Role of Police in Rape Case” was the focus of a forum at the Brewerville Town Hall. Brewerville was selected as the site because of the case of the 12-year-old girl who bled to death as a result of rape. The crowd of mostly women expressed outrage about the increase of rape in the community, noting the police failure to help the victim and her family, and some women said men who rape should be killed or castrated. The commander of the local police station urged the crowd to use legal avenues instead of taking the law into their own hands, noting that families and communities can play a greater role in seeking early medical treatment for rape victims. Police, he said, cannot build a strong case if they do not gather sufficient evidence immediately after the crime.

Residents who attended the forum at Thinker’s Village expressed concerns about living in the community with Ebola survivors. Some asked that Ebola survivors be isolated. Later, participants watched the drama, “Embracing Ebola Survivors.” After the drama, they were asked what they would do if they or their family members were stricken by Ebola. They were encouraged to accept Ebola survivors and empathize with people who were afflicted with the disease.

Ebola and its impact on women, children and survivors was the focus of five “I Know My Rights” forums held in March. A total of 149 people (142 women, 7men) attend the forums.

On March 4, 2015, 30 participants gathered in Jacob’s Town to discuss stigmatization of Ebola survivors. Salome Karwah, an Ebola survivor, led the discussion. Many residents admitted that they were afraid to accept survivors because of misinformation.

Participants at the forum in the Old Road Transformer Community discussed the “Role of Communities in Helping Ebola Orphans.” Rose Z. Gweh served as the community expert. At the end of the discussion, the community pledged to do what they could to assist the orphans.

Male Ebola survivors infecting their wives and girlfriends was the focus of a forum held in the 72nd community. Many of the 20 female participants said they did not know that male survivors are not supposed to have sex until 90 days after their recovery. Salome Karwa, an Ebola survivor, served as expert on the topic. Some of the women discussed ways to avoid enticing their husbands. For example, some suggested that women should not be naked in front of their husbands or wear sexy clothing.

Participants at the fourth forum in the ELWA Market community discussed the economic impact of the Ebola virus on their businesses. Some said they lost a lot of money because they could no longer sell dried meat. They said they received a lot of misinformation about dried meat and its link to Ebola. Christine Miller, head of the Henry Yallah Unification Market, served as expert on the discussion.

The importance of community health care center was the focus of the forum held in the Johansen Community. Susanna Kandeh, a local health care worker, engaged participants in a discussion about the importance of having a health facility in the community that can respond to residents’ basic health needs. After the meeting, residents agreed to identify a spot in the community to advocate for the construction of a community health-care facility.

5.11.2. ENHANCE CITIZEN AND GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT (WORKPLAN 1.7.2.)

5.11.2.1. ENCOURAGE COORDINATION AMONG NATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY COUNCIL OF LIBERIA AND INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL (WORKPLAN 1.7.2.2.)

The IRCL and NCSCCL held meetings with high officials of three government ministries to raise issues of concern to the citizens.

The Liberian Council of Churches intervened with the Full Gospel Minister Fellowships to take preventative measures in their laying of hands activities.

The Inter-Religious Council of Liberia (IRCL) and National Civil Society Council of Liberia (NCSCCL) held meetings during the quarter with several government agencies to pursue issues that were of concern to the population. An IRCL and

NCSCSL Ebola coordination meeting was held at the Bella Casa Hotel with 18 persons in attendance. The meeting discussed a possible regional Ebola conference with leaders from four communities along the Guinea and Sierra Leone border. There was also discussion of engaging with the Ministry of Education on the readiness of the education system in Liberia to start school. Additionally, discussion centered around the need for engagement with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning on accountability of Ebola funding. The participants at the meeting agreed to set up teams to carry out these engagements with government officials, after which they will report findings back to the group at the next scheduled meeting. Those at the meeting also agreed to carry out an informal survey at the borders with Sierra Leone and Guinea to gauge residents' interest in holding a meeting with communities across the border on Ebola prevention activities. This survey was conducted during the month of February, and the report will be shared with the coordinating organizations.

In a meeting with the Minister of Education and principal deputies, the IRCL and NCSCSL asked about the Ministry's plan for reopening schools and the health safety measures put into place, whether government has a package for private schools in the wake of the economic crisis the EVD has imposed on the country, and clarity on payment of fees demanded by teachers who provided Ebola services in the communities. The Minister and deputies stated that the Ministry had developed a plan for preparing the schools for reopening and provided a copy of the plan. She added that UNICEF has committed to donating hygienic materials and thermometers to 5,181 schools across the 15 counties. The Deputy Minister stated that government has declared free tuition in government schools up through middle school level and that government senior high students are only to pay L\$700 in three installments. Furthermore, the government is presently working with the schools and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning on an agreeable package to provide financial assistance to schools for three months, and the school systems have each submitted a budget for this purpose. Regarding fees for teachers who provided Ebola services during the break, they explained that government teachers were all shifted from classroom activities to providing Ebola education and were paid throughout the time. The Ministry also committed to paying those private school teachers who participated in the training and provided the services.

In discussions with the Ministry of Health on the restoration of health services, the IRCL and NCSCSL were informed that renovation work is ongoing at some health facilities, including Redemption Hospital, thanks to a partnership with MSF Switzerland.

The IRCL and NCSCSL also met with Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) officials on compensation for and treatment of healthcare workers.

The Liberian Council of Churches as part of the IRCL took the responsibility to engage the Full Gospel Minister Fellowships on the practice of laying hands on the sick in light of Ebola-related risks. They sent a letter to the group which introduced the coordination efforts between the IRCL and NCSCSL, expressed concern over the continuation of the practice without preventative measures, and outlined means of increasing the safety of these respected religious figures to allow them to continue to perform their ministerial duties as pastors.

The funding from IREX to support these two organizations to engage with different organizations during the EVD crisis and share lessons learned ended during this quarter. It is hoped that these two organizations will continue to engage and contribute to sustaining peace in Liberia.

5.11.2.2. DEVELOP EBOLA AWARENESS MESSAGES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GOVERNMENT AND INGOS AND DISTRIBUTE TO CRSS (WORKPLAN 1.7.2.3.)

Fifty-four men and eighteen women participated in a forum to discuss and document interventions made by community radio to prevent the spread of Ebola

45 CRSs air "Ebola Must Go" messages developed by CSML partners

LIWOMAC and CEMESP finalized the production of messages under the national “Ebola Must Go” campaign launched by the government of Liberia during the quarter. Messages were produced on five thematic areas that health officials identified as the most common ways Ebola is spread. The messages were “Bury all dead bodies safely,” “Keep sick people in their own area,” “Speak out if you know a sick person,” “Help health workers find those who touched a sick person,” and “Contacts should stay in place with food and water.”

The messages were produced in simple Liberian English and 16 Liberian languages and are being aired on 45 community radio stations in all 15 counties.

On March 17, IREX hosted a national forum to discuss and document the intervention of community radio stations in preventing the spread of Ebola. Panelists comprising station managers and reporters discussed the theme: “Trusted Voices in Challenging Times: Community Radio and the Ebola Crisis.” The forum focused on lessons learned from community radio intervention and documented best practices to inform future interventions. All the panelists acknowledged the key role of community radio in the fight against Ebola. With very little or no support from the national government, community radio stations took on a heroic task, and their role was key in reducing the virus.

Liberia’s Minister of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism Hon. Lewis G. Brown echoed the same sentiment. Community radio stations, he said, were the true champions in terms of disseminating information about Ebola. “The Government applauds your monumental efforts, but the challenge now is to continue this crusade of reportage to rally your respective communities to take on the national development agenda post-Ebola Liberia,” he said.

Seventy-two participants (54 men; 18 women) attended the forum at the Monrovia City Hall. Panelists discussed how they used talk shows, messaging and some of the reporting training they received from IREX to educate people about the disease and keep them informed about what was happening in their communities.

During the forum, participants underscored the need to continue using the skills they acquired in the Ebola Community Action Platform (E-CAP) to localize national issues. They want community radio stations to build on the local contacts developed during their Ebola coverage to enhance community profiles and enable them to become part of the radio. They also want ALICOR to serve as the framework for sharing of acquired resources and urged CRSs to continue advocating for the passage of the proposed Community Radio Sustainability Act. (Attachment 12)

5.11.2.3. PARTICIPATE IN EBOLA CLUSTER MEETINGS WITH GOVERNMENT AND INGOS (WORKPLAN 1.7.2.4.)

During the quarter, IREX continued to participate in the weekly Ebola communications meeting at the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism. IREX is one of more than a dozen international organizations helping the government develop and implement strategies aimed at educating the public about Ebola, encouraging cooperation between the media and government and promoting a diversity of stories on Ebola in the media.

5.11.2.4. ESTABLISH SITUATION ROOM TO MONITOR AND REPORT ON GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO EBOLA CRISIS (WORKPLAN 1.7.3.1.)

The Liberia CSO Ebola Response Task Force investigated and reported on information about the accounting of Ebola funds in six counties.

The task force hosted 2 (two) policy dialogues and released 2 (two) policy briefs.

The Liberia CSO Ebola Response Task Force during the last quarter pursued information regarding the use of Ebola funds distributed by the Ministry of Finance to various counties and of Ebola funds given to several national and international NGOs. The task force filed FOI requests to county authorities and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) and Ministry of Internal Affairs (MOI) asking for an accounting of a total of \$831,150 in county development funds earmarked for Ebola response in six counties between August and September. In

addition it filed FOI requests to 23 international and local organizations and MFDP for information about US\$244,270,515 cash and in-kind donations made and disbursed for Ebola.

On March 12 the task force held a press conference on government accountability for the funds distributed to counties, based on the MFDP's Ebola Financing Report of November 2014. They reported that the superintendents in Bong and Grand Gedeh Counties verbally acknowledged receiving the monies listed in the report, but that up to that point officials in Margibi, Gbarpolu, River Gee, and Montserrado had failed to provide any information. The Bong and Grand Gedeh superintendents said they had reported their expenditures to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but refused to make the report available to the task force. The MFDP has repeatedly told the task force that it does not have the expenditure reports from any of the six counties. The task force raised the question of why counties would refuse to give information on how they spent the money to MFDP, the statutory institution responsible for finances in the executive branch, and asked the MFDP and MIA to clarify the status of the financial reports.

The task force also urged the General Auditing Commission to follow the example of its Sierra Leonean counterpart by auditing all expenditures related to the EVD fight in Liberia and publish a report, and it urged the MFDP not to release any money to the county development funds of the six counties while the information is pending. The task force pointed out the historic importance of the Act to Establish the Freedom of Information and lamented the fact that officials of government would ignore this law. It has filed a complaint to the FOI commission.

The task force also said it had filed access to information requests with 23 international and local organizations and the MFDP for explanations around US\$244,270,515 in cash and in-kind donations made and disbursed for Ebola, and that the majority of the organizations had failed to respond to the information request. The task force called for an independent audit of institutions that cannot be audited by the GAC due to statutory limitations.

In February, the task force finalized its first policy brief after several revisions and reviews by IREX. The survey of health facilities and the accounting of Ebola funds were some of the major issues highlighted in the report, which was shared with local and national stakeholders. The second policy brief featured information on the vaccine trials and update on the efforts to get the government to account for Ebola funding.

On January 30, the Liberia CSO Ebola Response Task Force hosted a policy dialogue at Corina Hotel, at which it released findings from the health cluster's survey of 57 health facilities in five counties—Montserrado, Bong, Nimba, Lofa and Margibi and reported on its attempts to get information on the county funds discussed above.

On February 27, the task force hosted another policy dialogue, which focused on the Ebola trial vaccine and its impact on Liberians. Dr. Vuyu Golakai, Dean of the A.M. Dogliotti College of Medicine at the University of Liberia, and Dr. Stephen Kennedy, who is leading the vaccine trial clinic, debated the pros and cons of the vaccine. The public also had a chance to discuss their concerns about the vaccine. Some agreed about the need to develop a vaccine to prevent Ebola, but others voiced concern about the government's failure to educate the public about it and what to expect.

5.11.3. STRENGTHEN MEDIA COVERAGE OF EBOLA CRISIS (WORKPLAN 1.7.4.)

5.11.3.1. PROVIDE MENTORING AND TRAINING TO STRENGTHEN EBOLA COVERAGE AMONG MONROVIA-BASED JOURNALISTS (WORKPLAN 1.7.4.1.)

Situation Room reporters produced 95 stories during the quarter.

During the quarter, IREX hired a video editor and broadcast consultant to mentor six reporters assigned to the Situation Room at the Liberia Media Center. IREX took action because the task force faced numerous challenges implementing the project since its inception in October. Five of the reporters are based in Monrovia, and one is in Lofa County. The Monrovia-based reporters work at CSML partner stations United Methodist Radio, SKY-FM/TV, and LWDR. Since the intervention, Situation Room reporters produced 95 stories covering reporting trips in Monrovia and three counties—Bomi, Grand Gedeh and Grand Cape Mount.

In January, four reporters traveled to Bomi and Grand Cape Mount Counties to follow up on Ebola activities. In Cape Mount, they visited Bo Waterside, Jenewonde and Tiene, and in Bomi they focused mostly on Tubmanburg. The reporters produced stories on preparations for the reopening of schools, young people starting a bricklaying business to replace cross-border trade due to border closing, stigmatization of Ebola survivors in Bomi, and Ebola's impact on the economy. The stories were aired by their outlets between January 19 and 24th.

In February, the Monrovia-based reporters produced several stories on 36 orphans in one family. The children belong to a family that lost 13 family members to Ebola. The father, an herbalist, contracted it first while treating an Ebola patient, and he infected his three wives and other family members. The children are being cared for by relatives. Other Monrovia stories they reported concerned the Ebola vaccine trial as well as its impact on routine immunizations.

In March, the Monrovia-based Situation Room reporters continued to report on Ebola-related stories. On March 2-7, they visited schools around Monrovia to report on school enrollment and how schools were adapting to Ebola safety measures. They also reported on shutdown of the inpatient unit at the Seventh Day Adventist Hospital in Monrovia after a patient was diagnosed with Ebola, the discharge of the last Ebola survivor from an Ebola Treatment Unit, and the removal of Ebola victims' ashes from the crematorium to a new burial site on the Robertsfield Highway. The stories aired on LWDR, United Methodist Radio, LUX-FM and SKY-FM/TV and were posted on the Liberia Civil Society Organization's Ebola Response Task Force Facebook page.

On March 19 and 20, the Situation Room reporters covered the first national conference on community response to Ebola organized by IREX and NAYMOTE. Stories from survivors, community leaders and health officials were reported on the Facebook page, in major newspapers and on IREX partner radio stations. The conference was also aired live on LWDR and ELBC, the Liberian state radio station.

The Lofa reporter, Kulubah Akoi, focused on towns and villages devastated by Ebola and the impact of the reopening of the border. He reported most of his stories on Facebook because his video files were too large to send via Internet. During a visit to Monrovia in February, IREX provided him two external drives to enable him to store footage to send to Monrovia once a week. Situation Room reporting can be found on the task force's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/CSOebolataskforce?fref=ts>.

5.11.3.2. ENCOURAGE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS WHILE ENSURING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR MEDIA CONTENT (WORKPLAN 1.7.4.3.)

The PUL and CEMESP held 2 (two) forums to report the findings of media monitoring reports on Ebola coverage.

During the quarter, the PUL and CEMESP held two forums to discuss findings from the Situation Room media monitoring reports. The first, held on January 29 at the PUL headquarters, focused on media monitoring of three radio stations and five newspapers in November. They were LUX-FM, Voice FM (formerly HOT FM), LWDR, Women Voices, New Democrat, Daily Observer, Front Page Africa, Informer, and Public Agenda. Ebola represented 62 percent of newspaper coverage and 72 percent of radio stories. The findings indicated that media coverage improved in quality, content, professional standards, and ethics during the waning days of the crisis compared to the height of the crisis when journalists lacked a basic understanding of the disease and received very little support to report on the crisis.

The second forum reported the findings of media monitoring conducted in December. The monitoring was expanded to seven radio stations and seven newspapers—LUX-FM, LWDR, ELBC, Radio Veritas, SKY-FM, Fabric, and Truth FM, Daily Observer, Public Agenda, Informer, Women Voices, Heritage, New Democrat, and FrontPage Africa. A total of 226 newspaper stories and 110 radio stories were reviewed. Humanitarian assistance and Ebola survivors accounted for the highest number of stories.

Thirty people (26 males, 4 females) attended the second forum. During the discussion they said the report is helpful in improving their Ebola coverage, and that they wished the process had begun earlier during the height of the Ebola crisis.

5.11.3.3. PUBLICATION OF WEEKLY MEDIA MONITORING REPORT (WORKPLAN 1.7.4.4.)

The Liberia CSO Ebola Response Task Force issued 3 (three) media monitoring reports.

During the quarter, the Liberia CSO Ebola Response Task Force completed media monitoring reports for November, December, and January. The reports for November and December were also reported in the forums and discussed above in section 5.11.3.2.

For January, the same outlets were reviewed, with 346 newspaper stories and 142 radio stories monitored. Humanitarian assistance, Ebola awareness and prevention, and the impact of the virus on public life accounted for the majority of stories coded in January.

The media monitoring had numerous challenges in the beginning. The first report lacked details and there were inconsistencies in the data. The IREX Media Team worked with the LMC to address the problems and assigned the Monitoring & Evaluation team to assist the coders to record the data accurately and improve the analysis. IREX emphasized to the LMC that future reports must reflect improved standards and expectations. The December and January reports were much improved.

6. GENDER AND YOUTH (WORKPLAN 2.)

6.1. ENSURE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENDER AND YOUTH MAINSTREAMING STRATEGIES (WORKPLAN 2.1)

IREX held a national conference on rape at which over 100 participants identified gaps and made recommendations for addressing them.

In February, the Gender and Youth Manager worked with the Liberian Women Action Committee (LIWOMAC) and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to plan for the commemoration of the International Women's Day. The need to focus on rape as the key theme for the year's celebration was highlighted by all as this violent act continues to hinder the development and advancement of Liberian women and girls. A concept and implementation plan were developed.

In March, IREX teamed up with LIWOMAC and the Ministry and held community dialogues in four counties with the highest reports of rape—Montserrado, Margibi, Bong, and Nimba. The Gender and Youth Manager led the team to hold these dialogues which focused on the increased incidents of rape, access to and gaps in services, and the role of the community in prevention and response efforts. A total of 203 persons (97 men, 106 women) from eight communities representing traditional and community leaders, religious leaders, health practitioners, teachers, elders, women and youth groups participated in the forums.

The data concerning attitudes toward rape and gaps in services overwhelmingly revealed the great extent of the problem. This was documented in a report which was used in planning a national conference to call attention to the problem and identify steps for attacking it.

The conference was held on March 31, with over 100 individuals participating. Two panel discussions were held, one to review the role of the community in the prevention and response to rape, and the second to review service provision with a focus on gaps and challenges. The panelists included community representatives, representatives of the health sector, representatives of the Justice Ministry and Gender Ministry, Liberia National Police, the courts,

and NGOs. The discussion highlighted gaps in coordination among partners, lack of information on available services, absence of community trust in the LNP and court system, and the capacity issues for police and the health sector. The forum also provided the opportunity for community members to share real life experiences and dialogue with key national stakeholders.

The need for community engagement and involvement in future initiatives was highlighted by all. Recommendations for action included the establishment of community rape task forces, a budget allocation for rape response, establishment of an additional court for sexual offences, a review of the One Stop rape response centers, community police structures, and recruitment of more female prosecutors.

IREX plans to work with partners and the community to implement key recommendations that emerged from the conference and community forums. Attachment 13.

6.1.1. TRAIN GENDER FOCAL POINTS FROM MPS (WORKPLAN 2.1.2.)

In January, the Gender and Youth Manager scheduled a Gender Focal Point training for main partners that did not happen because of the other competing program activity and the reluctance of some Executive Directors to appoint focal points. To enhance the buy-in of Executive Directors, the Gender and Youth Manager facilitated a session at the Leadership Breakfast Meeting in February. The Manager sought to sensitize the Directors to the value of having a Gender Focal Point to support gender mainstreaming efforts within their programs. During the meeting, specific roles and responsibilities of the Focal Points were outlined to enable the leaders to make informed decisions. As a result, the EDs had a better understanding of the role of a Gender Focal Point and the added value that having a Gender Focal Point could bring to their organization. In March, follow up engagements with the EDs continued through one-on-one discussion. As a result of these engagements, all EDs provided names of individuals to be trained to perform this role. The focal point training was thus rescheduled for April.

6.1.2. PROVIDE ONGOING GENDER AND YOUTH MENTORING WITH CSOS AND CRSS (WORKPLAN 2.1.3.)

The Gender and Youth Manager met with NAYMOTE in March to discuss ways in which the organization could benefit from gender mainstreaming mentoring. The organization requested support from the G&Y Manager to review their policy and provide technical advice on making it more gender sensitive. The G&Y Manager waits to provide the support as soon as the document is received.

6.1.3. WORK WITH LIWOMAC TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO FEJAL TO ROLL OUT SEA PREVENTION/AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN THE MEDIA (WORKPLAN 2.1.4.)

In February the Gender and Youth Manager worked with LIWOMAC and the Media Team to plan and hold the validation of the Media Gender Policy with media stakeholders. The strategy is expected to serve as a road map for increased gender integration within the media. Prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse in the media is a key benchmark in the policy. Having had buy-in of media managers, the roll out of the SEA campaign within the media was then scheduled to begin in March.

7. GRANTS (WORKPLAN 3.)

7.1. ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH USAID AND IREX POLICIES (WORKPLAN 3.1)

All grants documents (due diligence, agreements, payments, closeouts, etc.) processed during the reporting period were done in compliance with both policies.

7.1.1. ENSURE ALL SUBGRANT DOCUMENTS ARE PROPERLY FILED IN LINE WITH CSML CLOSEOUT SCHEDULE (WORKPLAN 3.1.1.)

The Grants Office worked to ensure that all subgrant documents received were properly filed during the reporting period. The Grants Office rearranged and updated the filing system for all contractual/consultative agreements, created a tracking system for said agreements, distinguished files by department and status as current or closed subgrants, and created a form to be filled in with relevant information by any staff wanting to have access to the hard files. All of these were put in place to facilitate audit and closeout processes.

7.1.2. ENSURE ALL SUBGRANT INFORMATION IS POSTED INTO IKNOW TRACKING SYSTEM REGULARLY (WORKPLAN 3.1.2.)

During the quarter, a thorough review of the online subaward tracking system (iKNOW) was done to ascertain what documents are missing. The resulting list was shared with program teams, and as a result, a total of ninety-nine assorted files were uploaded to the system. As we near the closeout, Grants will ensure all subgrants documents are regularly scanned and uploaded to the system. A weekly update with a list of newly uploaded files is submitted to the supervisor and IREX HQ.

7.2. PROVIDE SUPPORT TO CS, MEDIA, RSC, AND GENDER & YOUTH DEPARTMENTS AS NEEDED (WORKPLAN 3.2.)

The grants office provided all needed support to program staff during the reporting period. This support included but was not limited to reviewing grants documents for non-program details, sending a weekly update on grants activities, sending the Excel version of the grants tracker, and preparing closeout certificates for expired grants.

7.3. ADMINISTER GRANTS (WORKPLAN 3.3.)

The Grants Office managed and maintained the organization of four administered CSML grants during the quarter.

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION (WORKPLAN 4.)

8.1. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (WORKPLAN 4.1.)

8.1.1. ADMINISTER THE PMP (WORKPLAN 4.1.1.)

During the quarter, the M&E Department worked on the revision of the program's Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to include the addition of two new indicators from USAID and updated the Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) for the forty-six (46) indicators under the main program. The M&E Department finalized work on the revision of the program's Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and submitted to COP for onward submission to USAID for approval.

The Media Content Analysis Tool, which allows IREX CSML to collect data to track whether and how media partners and reporters are providing useful, balanced and impartial content to the Liberian people was reactivated. Three coders were employed to analyze print and radio outputs. The coders coded stories from January to March for The Daily Observer, Public Agenda, Informer, Women Voices, Heritage, LWDR, Sky FM, LUX FM and ELUM. During the period 616 stories were coded from the nine print and radio outlets (524 newspaper stories, 66 radio news stories, 10 talk shows and 16 TV News shows). Data from the MCAT was entered and stored using Excel data base for analysis. The raw data was submitted to Dr. Maureen Taylor of Social Impact for analysis and report writing.

8.1.1.1. COLLECT PERFORMANCE MONITORING DATA (WORKPLAN 4.1.1.1.)

The M&E Department worked with the program departments and implementing partners in January to collect and report performance data for all indicators developed under the Ebola Response Plan and Strengthened Civil Society and Media for Transparent Elections. The M&E department also compiled and submitted data of all trainings and conferences held from January 1, 2012, to December 31, 2014 to the COP for onward submission to IREX HQ.

In January, USAID's M&E contractor L-MEP scheduled a Data Quality Assessment (DQA) to be conducted in February. In preparation the COP and the M&E Team met with the L-MEP Dep. COP/Democracy and Governance Specialist to look at the focus of this DQA, indicators to be assessed, and relevant documents to be submitted before the start of the process. The M&E Team then compiled a list of partners that implemented activities under the Ebola Response Plan and Strengthened Civil Society and Media for Transparent Elections in Bong, Nimba, Grand Bassa and Montserrado Counties and submitted it to L-MEP to use in developing a sample of respondents for the DQA. The Team developed and shared definitions with the program departments for ten new indicators (five each from the Ebola Response Plan and Strengthened Civil Society and Media for Transparent Elections) selected to be assessed during the DQA. Feedback received from the program departments was incorporated and the final list for the indicators and their definitions was submitted to L-MEP.

From February 2-7, the M&E Manager traveled to Ganta, Gbarnga, and Buchanan with the L-MEP Democracy and Governance Specialist to verify field data against reported data from CSML quarterly reports. The field trip was a success as was highlighted in findings from the DQA presented by L-MEP to USAID and IREX. Additionally, the M&E team in February worked with the program departments and finalized the list of Ebola and Objective Eight related indicators to be assessed by L-MEP during the third Data Quality Assessment of CSML's indicators. Data was collected for all the indicators and the full list was submitted to L-MEP for use during the DQA.

The M&E team worked with the Media Team in February to revise the Ebola Situation Room coding sheets used by the LMC for proper collection and reporting of data and in March continued work with the Situation Room to ensure that reports were timely and useful for decision-making.

During the quarter, the M&E Team reactivated the collection of Most Significant Change (MSC) stories, which was earlier halted as a result of the Ebola crisis. The MSC evaluation method helped capture the most significant changes that occurred due to CSML and its partners' activities. The M&E team reached out to partner organizations in the seven counties to finalize fifty-six (56) stories that were earlier written and submitted to IREX. The Team completed revisions and edits to the stories and reduced the stories to 51, which were submitted to the COP and Dr. Maureen Taylor for review. These stories will help document the CSML story on the gains the program has made in five years.

In March the M&E Team collected data from five partner organizations (PUL, LMC, WONGOSOL, NAYMOTE and LIWOMAC) that implemented election-related activities under Objective 8. The data will help inform the pending Objective 8 Impact Assessment Surveys. The Team also developed questions and final survey tools for the collection of data to inform the surveys.

8.1.1.2. UPDATE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR REFERENCE SHEETS TO INCLUDE UP TO DATE INDICATOR DATA FROM YEAR FOUR (WORKPLAN 4.1.1.2.)

During the month of January, Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) for the 46 indicators were updated in the Revised M&E Plan and submitted to the Chief of Party for review and onward submission to USAID.

8.1.1.3. ENTER QUARTERLY/BIANNUAL AND ANNUAL PMP DATA INTO THE PIDS (WORKPLAN 4.1.1.3.)

The M&E department worked with the Program Team to collect and collate all performance indicator data for all CSML quarterly indicators. The data was then entered into the USAID PIDS system.

8.1.2. CONDUCT ASSESSMENTS (WORKPLAN 4.1.5.)

The M&E Team developed a Quick Survey for the Civil Society Team to gather data to assess the demand for capacity development services for civil society. This was in the CS workplan as part of its exit strategy in order to gauge the opportunities for CS Master Trainers and Mentors to continue using the skills they developed through the CSML to facilitate the development of other CSOs. The M&E Manager met with the COP and CS Team in January to gain more insight about what is needed from the Quick Survey, the intended survey respondents, suggested tools, etc. The survey was then developed and rolled out in February. Three different respondents (one for International organizations and Donors, one for Local Service Providers, and one for Local CSOs/NGOs) serve as targets for the surveys. Data collection, data entry and analysis for the surveys were completed in March, and summary reports were produced using the data collected. The summary reports from the surveys helped inform CSML of the needs of partner CSOs/NGOs and the existing coordination with other institutions doing similar work. The summary reports were submitted to the CSD and COP.

In March the M&E Team completed the collection of data for the first two parts of the Network Analysis Survey with the Main Partners, and national and international organizations identified by IREX to establish a nationwide network of CSML reach through the Main Partners of the five years of the program.

During the month of March, the Team completed a draft report of the SED four lenses assessment with seven CSOs and nine CRSs in Bong and Nimba Counties, which are part of the RSC pilot program. The report when completed will highlight the partners' existing capacities, determine their capacity building needs and approaches, develop a social enterprise capacity development plan tailored specifically to the needs of individual institutions, and develop a basis for monitoring and evaluating the organization's capacity and development. Results from the assessment will be used to continue the development of technical assistance packages for the partners.

The M&E Team also released the report of the final perception survey during the quarter under review. (Attachment 14).

8.1.2.1. COLLABORATE WITH MAIN PARTNERS AND CONDUCT YR 5 OCA (WORKPLAN 4.1.5.1.)

The M&E Team collaborated with the CS Team to carry out Year 5 organizational capacity assessments (OCA) for the seven CSML main partners, as well as AGENDA and NAYMOTE. This is the final OCA for the MPs under the program.

The M&E Associate worked with the RSC team to conduct the final OCA and SED Four Lenses Assessment with seven CSOs and nine CRSs that are being mentored by the RSC in Nimba and Bong Counties. These final assessments will give information about organizations' existing capacity and capacity gaps as the program closes and guide them in planning their own continuing interventions.

8.2. TRAINING AND TOOLS (WORKPLAN 4.2.)

During the month of January, attendance records for all CSML trainings were collected and entered into the Excel attendance database system.

9. ATTACHMENTS